Teresa Freire *Editor*

Positive Leisure Science

From Subjective Experience to Social Contexts

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To
Pedro
Tomás, Francisco and Margarida

Preface

Life as we know it consists of a series of experiences strung along in time. What we become aware of as this stream of consciousness unfolds during a period of many years determines the quality of our existence.

A reasonable approximation holds that a human brain can process about 105 sensations, or "bits" of information, every second. Sitting at the computer typing, I am potentially aware of the sunshine streaming through the leaves of the oak tree outside the window, the call of a mockingbird hidden in the branches, the strain in my back muscles as I am hunched over the keyboard, and some ideas for the next words I want to type. No one actually knows how to compute exactly how many bits it takes to process all these sensations but probably several times more than the actual limits of my processing capacity. To understand what a person is telling you requires processing about 60 bits per second–which is why we cannot really understand two people talking to us at the same time.

If this is true, and assuming that you are awake 16 h each day and live to be 80 years old (I used to say 75, but now that I reached 76, I better use a more extended example), you have the opportunity to experience roughly 97 billion sensations. This will be your life. So, it can be said that what our lives will be depends on what sensations will enter the stream of consciousness. And that depends in part on circumstances outside ourselves – on the kind of stimuli that happen to be available in the environment. But it also depends on our choice: on what we choose to attend to. Attention is the gatekeeper to consciousness, and thus, it controls the quality of our lives.

So, where is our attention going? In other words, what does our life consist of? Some years ago, a former student and then colleague, Jeanne Altmann, spent many summers in the Amboseli National Park of Kenya studying the daily life of one of our distant relatives, *Papio cynocephalus*, also known as the yellow baboon.

One of the surprising findings in her observations of *Papio* was how similar their everyday life was to ours. They spent approximately one-third of it sleeping. Of the time they were awake, one-third was devoted to finding food, one-third to maintenance activities like moving from one feeding ground to another, and one-third to free-time activities – the juveniles playing and the older baboons grooming each

other or in solitary meditation. We also spend about 30% of our waking life in one of these three kinds of activities: productive ones like work; maintenance ones like cleaning, cooking, or commuting; and finally, 30% in "free time." With some historical fluctuations, these three kinds of activities constitute the parameters of our lives.

According to anthropologists like Marshall Sahlins, our ancestors who lived by hunting and gathering devoted much less time to production and maintenance than we do and spent much more free-time talking, dancing, or staring in the distance. And of course, once civilization – which literally means living in cities – began in China, India, and Egypt, great differences in time use started to appear. Rulers, priests, warriors, and their families were freed from productive and maintenance tasks, which then were piled on to the shoulders of farmers and domestic slaves who as a result had almost no free time at all.

This unequal division of labor resulted in a profound differentiation not only in what people did every day but in the quality of their lives. The majority had to devote all their psychic energy simply to survive by doing repetitive activities. They had no time left to attend to new information, to enrich their knowledge with anything new. The limits of their attentional capacity – the six million bits per day and the 97 billion bits over the longest lifetime – were taken up with chores that had to be done for their own survival and for adding to the free time of those in power. Not surprisingly, new ideas and ways of life were developed by those men who had slaves and servants to take care of such everyday needs as getting and preparing food or even washing and dressing.

Thus, it is not surprising that when the Greeks who enjoyed free time began to reflect on the human condition, they concluded that it was free time that made men and women truly human. If we spend all our time just taking care of survival needs, we remain nothing more than survival machines, just as the other animals are. Free time, on the other hand, provides the opportunity to become something more: *survival machines that learn to become more complex than what they were made by nature*. If a person used this opportunity wisely, then his or her free time became *schole*, or leisure, the word from which the word *school* derives. In other words, classical thinkers imagined leisure to be free time that was used for learning.

Of course, free time is rarely turned into *schola*: most of it is spent on relaxation, amusement, or inebriation. But many of the products that have enriched the human condition have indeed resulted from well-used free time: Galileo did his experimental work – the first in human history – in his free time; Lavoisier the "father of modern chemistry" funded his research from the inheritance his mother left him and from jobs in financial administration; Einstein did much of his groundbreaking theoretical writing as a personal interest on the side of his real job as an evaluator for the Swiss Patent Office.

So, Aristotle might have been right about the association between leisure and the evolution of culture – even though he might not have clearly seen how the causal relations actually worked. Nowadays, we would say that free time is a necessary – but not sufficient – cause of learning beyond what is needed to survive. Innovation, creativity, and personal growth are all contingent on persons being able to liberate

some of their attention – or *psychic energy* – from the demands of survival. If William James, the founder of American psychology, was right, we create our lives by what we choose to attend to. If during the 30% or so of our days, when we are free to chose what to attend to, we chose to pay attention to things, ideas, or events that add nothing to our lives, or to that of others, we are going to end up as very different persons than what we would have become if that third of our time on earth had been more judiciously invested.

Within this enormously important and vast thematic space, there are several concrete components that the social sciences can actually study. This book collects some of the most promising directions of research and brings together a number of exciting findings that greatly enrich our understanding of what a fully human life can be. They do so from the perspective of positive psychology a new conceptual development that since the year 2000 has generated a vast research literature on happiness, engagement, and a meaningful life.

Along four parts on *Positive Leisure Science*, a number of leading scholars present studies that investigate the role of leisure in positive living, human development, and well-being. Altogether, the studies range from describing how leisure affects the formation of a positive personal identity in adolescence to how it brings fulfillment in later life, from what opportunities it presents to prevent adolescent deviance to how it can enrich family relationships, or moving from ontogenesis to phylogenesis, how leisure contributes to cultural development in an evolutionary framework. The book also deals with specific modalities that transform free time into leisure understood as *schola*. For example, how the flow experience can produce engagement, how physical activity relates to health, how leisure contributes to well-being and therapeutic recreation, or how leisure well spent leads to a happy life.

These are hardly simple questions to answer. Yet few can be more important. The authors who have contributed to this volume have provided all of us with a great service. It is to be hoped that more and more psychologists will follow in their footsteps in further exploring how free time can be used to further enrich the evolution of humanity.

Claremont, 2011 Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi

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Teresa Freire

Contents

Introduction

Researchers within various scientific fields, from biopsychological to social science, are faced with the new challenge of understanding human flourishing and a life worth living. The focus of such research is to examine the personal resources and contextual conditions that facilitate positive development across the life course in order to achieve the optimal functioning and well-being of individuals and societies.

Leisure is one of the most ancient concepts with a recognized positive impact on life. As a state of mind or as societal structures and opportunities, leisure is considered a complex scientific phenomenon that informs the human experience and behavior and human relations with individual functioning, life contexts, or civic institutions. By its own nature, leisure requires an integrated approach that combines interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary perspectives to form new perspectives of the aspects of leisure. In fact, leisure studies are moving toward a change in the focus of analysis and the rebuilding of theoretical frameworks and approaches, with recent publications showing that traditional variables must be reviewed and reanalyzed into a new positive framework.

Martin Seligman and Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (2000) began the scientific movement of positive psychology, which has since quickly spread across various scientific domains, both within and outside psychology, making positive approaches quite relevant in science. The current book extends positive psychology by embedding leisure into this positive science field, following the new paradigm and aggregating various domains and fields. Positive science can be applied to the field of leisure, and, in turn, leisure can serve as an arena to study some of the most important optimal functioning variables. Therefore, "positive leisure" can be (and should be) a specific branch of empirical literature and research on human functioning, with conceptual connections to several scientific domains (psychology, sociology, biomedical, economy, and others).

This new approach justified the main title of the book: Positive Leisure Science. This book integrates varied and honored contributions of researchers from various scientific fields across different countries. It presents knowledge on a diverse range of topics about optimizing socio-cognitive processes and behaviors, places and contexts, societies, and cultures through leisure. These topics are unified by an

underlying continuum that extends from individuals and subjective experiences to social worlds, which justifies the chosen subtitle: "From Subjective Experience to Social Contexts." All contributions highlight components of everyday life, showing that subjective experience and life trajectories are structured and social goals and life purposes are defined and achieved within interactions between individuals and their lived contexts and environments in daily life.

Altogether, the chapters show that leisure can be an experience, activity, or context that improves human strengths, individual, and social resources and thus contributes to the well-being of individuals and societies. The structure of the book and its contributions reflect this intentional articulation across different fields. Of note, the authors freely organized chapters. The only common purpose was to show the positive impact of leisure as a main source of optimized human development and well-being, examining individuals and contexts/cultures for a positive life. The chapters are not presented as state-of-the-art chapters but as authorship chapters that aim to present specific work and research on leisure within positive leisure science, by integrating the study of different populations and life contexts across the life course through the use of various methodologies and measures.

This book has selected topics, contents, and authors, with the aim of promoting new reflections and a new focus of analysis through the common lens of positive leisure science. As a final product, the book consists of 12 chapters that are structured into four parts. Although these parts are thematically related and all chapters embrace the relation between subjective experience and social contexts, the focus of each part is different. The first part integrates the contribution of two authors, Robert A. Stebbins and Douglas A. Kleiber. This part highlights leisure and its contributions to positive living by considering broad concepts about social sciences and life perspectives. In the second part, devoted to the relation between leisure, growth, and development, four chapters integrate developmental processes, contexts, and culture through the contribution of the following authors: Linda L. Caldwell and Monique Faulk, Teresa Freire, Ramon B. Zabriskie and Tess Kay, and Marta Bassi and Antonella Delle Fave. In the third part, the authors focus explicitly on the topic of well-being and quality of life and on how leisure may promote, improve, or change individuals' lives and societies' structures. Five chapters are included in this part, with contributions from Colleen D. Hood and Cynthia P. Currents; Kim Perkins and Jean Nakamura; Jorge Mota, Mauro Barros, José Carlos Ribeiro, and Maria Paula Santos; John M. Jenkins; and Jeroen Nawijn and Ruut Veenhoven. Finally, the fourth part consists of a unique chapter from Teresa Freire and Linda L. Caldwell. In this chapter, the authors discuss new challenges for theoretical and empirical research, suggesting that the study of leisure can shed light on multiple issues about human behavior or societal issues and structures. Within their afterthoughts on leisure and future research directions, they propose a new perspective on the concept of "leisure science," making their new concept of positive leisure science (PLS) quite relevant in the actuality.

Teresa Freire

Part I
Leisure and Positive Living

Chapter 1
Research and Theory on Positiveness in the Social Sciences: The Central Role of Leisure

Robert A. Stebbins

Positiveness is a personal sentiment felt by people who pursue those things in life they desire, the things they do to make their existence attractive, worth living. Such people feel positive about these aspects of life. Because of this sentiment, they may also feel positive toward life in general. A main focus of social scientific research on positiveness is on how, when, where, and why people pursue those things in life that they desire, on the things they do to create a worthwhile existence that is, in combination, substantially rewarding, satisfying, and fulfilling. The goal of this chapter is to explain the central role of leisure and certain kinds of work in generating positiveness. It is in the domains of leisure, and to a lesser extent work, that people are most likely to find activities leading to a worthwhile existence.

Only in psychology has the study of positiveness achieved the status of a recognized specialty and then only recently. The idea is new, even if in some fields traces of it may be found far back in their histories. We begin with a deeper look at positiveness than is possible using the definition just presented. After a discussion of positiveness in various social sciences, sections follow on the serious leisure perspective and the concept of occupational devotion, which together, form a main theoretic base for the study and application of research in positive social science.

The Nature of Positiveness

It is possible to sharpen our understanding of this idea first by indicating what it is not. First, positiveness in the sense used here does not refer in any way to positivism, usually meaning controlled, quantitative research procedure whose roots are

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commonly traced most immediately to the logical positivists of early twentieth-century philosophy. Second, positiveness is not essentially problem centered; it is not about life's many difficult personal and social problems. Moreover, the positive wing of any social science is not oriented toward trying to understand and solve them. Third, positiveness is not description. All the social sciences describe and explain a variety of phenomena, without ever interpreting them in either positive or negative terms. For instance, studying family structure is largely a descriptive, neutral undertaking in sociology and anthropology. The same may be said for linguistics, where scholars may trace the changes in a society's mother tongue. In geography, some researchers describe in neutral language how groups of people adapt to and use their natural environment, without necessarily dwelling on either the positive or the negative features of that adaptation.

What Positiveness Is

I have just claimed that positiveness is a personal sentiment felt by people pursuing those things in life they desire, the things they do to make their existence attractive, worth living. It is evident from research, primarily done in the field of leisure studies, that this sentiment comes from engaging in activities that participants find rewarding, satisfying, and fulfilling. Those activities are mostly found in leisure or in work that is like leisure, discussed later as "devotee work." Leisure is uncoerced activity undertaken during free time. Uncoerced activity is positive activity that, using their abilities and resources, people both want to do and can do at either a personally satisfying or a deeper fulfilling level (Stebbins, 2007a). Devotee work (Stebbins, 2004b) is like serious leisure, in that it meets the six distinctive qualities of the latter. At the same time, it constitutes all or part of the worker's livelihood.

Furthermore, positiveness is far more than an absence of negativeness, even though such absence may help focus attention on the first. Negativeness is the state of mind people experience when they ponder or are faced with personal and social problems. These problems are inherently disagreeable. Moreover, their solution, even their partial solution, cannot in itself engender positive feelings about life. Granted, successfully controlling or even ameliorating these problems brings welcome relief to those people. But managing a personal or communal problem this way, be the problem rampant drug addiction, growing domestic violence, persistent poverty, or enduring labor conflict, is hardly the same as people pursuing something they like. Instead, control of or solutions to these problems brings, in effect, a level of tranquility to life – these efforts make life less disagreeable. This situation, in turn, gives those who benefit from them some time, energy, and inclination to search for what will, when found, make their existence more agreeable, more worth living.

Positiveness in Psychology and Sociology

Positive psychology is the oldest discipline in the social sciences formally dedicated to the study and promotion of positiveness. Among its antecedents are the ideas of such humanistic psychologists as Abraham Maslow and Erich Fromm. Today's positive psychology is interested in uncovering people's strengths and promoting their positive functioning (Snyder & Lopez, 2007, p. 3). Martin Seligman observed in his presidential address in 1998 to the annual meeting of the American Psychological Association that a new field known as "positive psychology" had emerged within the discipline of psychology.

> I proposed changing the focus of the science [psychology] and the organization of scientists in the world. I proposed changing the focus of the science and the profession from repairing the worst things in life to understanding and building the qualities that make life worth living.… I call this new orientation "Positive Psychology." At the subjective level, the field is about positive experience: well-being, optimism, flow, and the like. At the individual level it is about the character strengths – love, vocation, courage, aesthetic sensibility, leadership, perseverance, forgiveness, originality, future-mindedness, and genius. At the community level it is about the civic virtues and the institutions that move individuals toward better citizenship, responsibility, parenting, altruism, civility, moderation, tolerance, and work ethic (From Seligman's "Positive Psychology Network Concept Paper" is available at: http://www.psych.upenn.edu/seligman/ppgrant.htm, p. 3; see also Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

Today, positive psychology is a vibrant branch of psychology, both in the classroom and in the realm of research.

Much more recently, I have set out the fundamentals of a positive sociology (Stebbins, 2009). It complements positive psychology by concentrating on social meanings, interpersonal interaction, human agency, and the personal and social conditions in which these three unfold with reference to particular human activities. Such a sociology centers on the activities people can do and want to do to make their lives worth living. Importantly, they find these activities in their leisure or their devotee work, sometimes in both.

Positive sociology is the study of what people do to organize their lives such that those lives become, in combination, substantially rewarding, satisfying, and fulfilling. As just defined, it is a new idea, even if traces of it have been around as long as sociology itself. Remember, for instance, that Max Weber (1947, pp. 413–415) wrote about amateurs. Robert Dubin (1979, p. 405), writing more recently at a time when "relevance" was the reigning battle cry in American sociology, observed that a relevant sociology should do more than focus on the "disarticulations between the individual and society." He said it also needs theoretic models on how people construct "worthwhile lives." Such models are predominantly the province of the sociology of leisure, the principal wellspring of positive sociology.

Activity: A Central Concept

So positive sociology and psychology are seen here as rooting primarily in the pursuit of leisure and devotee work, which, however, must be expanded to apply to a larger swath of everyday life. That is, at the *activity* level, all of everyday life may be conceptualized as being experienced in one of three domains: work, leisure, and nonwork obligation (Stebbins, 2009). Each of the three is itself enormously complex, while there is also some overlap in the domains. The novel claim being made here – that all the social sciences can be, and should also be, positive and that positive feelings and activities matter a great deal – rests on this, the domain approach. Considering the domain of nonwork obligation (e.g., disagreeable domestic chores, civic responsibilities), emphasizing the positive side of work (especially its devotee variety), and viewing both from the angle of leisure and positiveness, brings to sociology, psychology, and the other social sciences an uncommon approach for understanding contemporary life. In positive sociology, an *activity* is a type of pursuit, wherein participants in it mentally or physically (often both) think or do something, motivated by the hope of achieving a desired end. Life is filled with activities, both pleasant and unpleasant: sleeping, mowing the lawn, taking the train to work, enduring a physical exam, eating lunch, playing tennis matches, running a meeting, and on and on. Activities, as this list illustrates, may be viewed by the people who participate in them as work, leisure, or nonwork obligation.

This definition of activity, which is general, gets further refined in the concept of *core activity*: a distinctive set of interrelated actions or steps that must be followed to achieve the outcome or product that the participant seeks. As with general activities, core activities are pursued in work, leisure, and nonwork obligation. Consider some examples in serious leisure: a core activity of alpine skiing is descending snow-covered slopes, in cabinet making it is shaping and finishing wood, and in volunteer fire fighting it is putting out blazes and rescuing people from them. In each case, the participant takes several interrelated steps to successfully ski downhill, make a cabinet, or rescue someone. Casual leisure core activities, which are much less complex than in serious leisure, are exemplified in the actions required to hold sociable conversations with friends, savor beautiful scenery, and offer simple volunteer services (e.g., handing out leaflets, directing traffic in a theater parking lot, clearing snow off the neighborhood hockey rink). Work-related core activities are seen in, for instance, the actions of a surgeon during an operation or the improvisations on a melody by a jazz clarinetist. The core activity in mowing a lawn (nonwork obligation) is pushing or riding the mower. Executing an attractive core activity and its component steps and actions is a main feature drawing participants to the general activity encompassing it, because this core directly enables them to reach a cherished goal. It is the opposite for disagreeable core activities. In short, the core activity has motivational value of its own, even if more strongly held for some activities than others and even if some activities are disagreeable but still have to be done.

Core activities can be classified as simple or complex, the two concepts finding their place at opposite poles of a continuum. The location of a core activity on this continuum partially explains its appeal or lack thereof. Most casual leisure is comprised of a set of simple core activities. Here, *homo otiosus* (leisure man) need only turn on the television set, observe the scenery, drink the glass of wine (no oenophile is he), or gossip about someone. Complexity in casual leisure increases slightly when playing a board game using dice, participating in a Hash House Harrier treasure hunt, or serving as a casual volunteer by, say, collecting bottles for the Scouts or making tea and coffee after a religious service. And Harrison's (2001) study of upper-middle-class Canadian mass tourists revealed a certain level of complexity in their sensual experience of the touristic sites they visited. For people craving the simple things in life, this is the kind of leisure to head for. The other two domains abound with equivalent simple core activities, as in the work of a parking lot attendant (receiving cash/making change) or the efforts of a householder whose nonwork obligation of the day is raking leaves.

So, if complexity is what people want, they must look elsewhere. Leisure projects are necessarily more complex than casual leisure activities. The types of projects listed later in this chapter provide ample proof of that. Nonetheless, they are not nearly as complex as the core activities around which serious leisure revolves. The accumulated knowledge, skill, training, and experience of, for instance, the amateur trumpet player, hobbyist stamp collector, and volunteer emergency medical worker are vast and defy full description of how they are applied during conduct of the core activity. Of course, neophytes in the serious leisure activities lack these acquisitions, though it is unquestionably their intention to acquire them to a level where they will feel fulfilled. As with simple core activities, complex equivalents also exist in the other two domains. In work, consider the two earlier examples of the surgeon and the jazz clarinetist. In the nonwork domain, driving in city traffic and (for some people) preparing their annual income tax return differ in their complexity.

Can all of life be characterized as an endless unfolding of activities? Probably not. For instance, the definition of activity does not fit things some people are, through violence, compelled to experience entirely against their will, including rape, torture, interrogation, forced feeding, and judicial execution. It would seem to be likewise for the actions of those driven by a compulsive mental disorder. There are also comparatively more benign situations in which most people still feel compelled to participate, among them, enduring receipt of a roadside traffic citation or a bawling out from the boss. Both fail to qualify as activities. In all these examples, the ends sought are those of other people, as they pursue their activities. Meanwhile the "victims" lack agency unless they can manage to counterattack with an activity of resistance.

Activity as just defined is, by and large, a foreign idea in all the social sciences, save leisure studies, education, physical education, and kinesiology where it appears to have originated. Sure social scientists occasionally write about, for instance, criminal, political, or economic activity, but in such works, they are referring, in general terms, to a broad category of behavior, not a particular set of actions comprising a pursuit. Instead, our positive sociological concept of activity knows

its greatest currency in leisure studies, education, and the other two interdisciplinary fields just listed. In this framework, the character strengths and civic virtues mentioned by Seligman in the quotation above may be understood as gaining expression through activities, in general, and core activities, in particular. These activities are found for the most part in leisure and devotee work.

The concept of activity is eminently sociological, and therefore a main contribution to the study of positiveness which has so far been conceptualized primarily in psychological terms The idea of activity (including core activity) links the individual's experience in carrying it out with culture, history, and social structure. For many activities, in diverse ways, involve the participant with other people, sometimes in groups or organizations, and invariably in being directed according to sets of rules and expectations, all of which are framed in the historical development of the activity itself and its stature and recognition in the larger society. Moreover, it is through particular activities that people, propelled by their own agency, find positive things in life. These they blend and offset with particular negative requirements that they must also deal with. To accomplish this, they must consider life across all three domains, resulting for those who persevere in an optimal work/life balance.

Positiveness in the Other Social Sciences

So far as is known, no other social science beyond psychology and sociology has a concept of positiveness. Leisure studies is an interesting exception to this assertion, since it alone is centered wholly on positive activity. It is the "happy science" (Stebbins, 2007c), observed in contradistinction to economics, which Thomas Carlyle once maligned as the "dismal science." As for the other social sciences, it is probable that all have conducted research on positive phenomena, no matter how narrowly oriented any one of them is to solving problems or simply describing its subject matter. In fact, even economics has a positive face (e.g., for a discussion of how people spend their money on leisure activities, see Nazareth, 2007, Chap. 9 and Frey's, 2008 work on the economics of happiness).

Leisure and information science (LIS) exemplifies well this situation. The study of leisure, particularly its serious form, is gaining ground there as a new way of understanding the discipline's central interest: the storage, retrieval, and dissemination of information. Hartel (2003) points out that, historically, LIS has heavily favored the study of scholarly and professional informational domains while largely ignoring those related to leisure. In a move to help redress this imbalance, she has introduced the study of information in hobbies. Serious leisure is examined for its library and informational forces and properties as these relate to a particular core leisure activity and the organizational milieu in which it is pursued. *Library Trends* (2009, vol. 57, no. 4) contains a set of articles on leisure and LIS research. Despite all this, the field still lacks a concept of positive library and information science.

Consider geography. While it, too, lacks a concept of positive geography, positive studies have been carried out. For example, Crouch (2000) has examined the link

between leisure and geography as observed in Britain. The various studies of political participation, a genre of volunteering, constitute a positive contribution of political science (for a partial list, see Smith, Stebbins, & Dover, 2006, p. 177). Some fields of history, notably the histories of the arts and the sciences, have plenty to consider that is positive (even if Voltaire held that "history is little else than a picture of human crimes and misfortunes," *l'Ingénu*, Chap. 10). Artists and scientists are either amateur or professional (devotee) workers. See, for example, Mally (2000) on the history of amateurs in Russian theater between 1917 and 1938 and Williams (1996) on the history of amateurs in American astronomy. Blanchard (1981) has written an anthropological account of play among the Choctaw Indians in the USA. Despite these studies and others in them, none of these fields appears to have a concept of positiveness to help explain the favorable feelings people have toward the objects of theory and research considered by these fields.

At this time, we turn to leisure and then devotee work – which together provide the fertile soil in which so much of positiveness grows. What is in this soil? Chief among its productive properties are opportunities for exercise of personal agency, finding self-fulfillment, and developing and maintaining valued interpersonal relationships. This soil also engenders participation in community life, appealing emotional state as well as well-being and a high quality of life. Leisure and devotee work are veritable hothouses for an attractive lifestyle and a life worth living.

The Serious Leisure Perspective

The serious leisure perspective is a theoretic framework that synthesizes three main forms of leisure, showing, at once, their distinctive features, similarities, and interrelationships (Stebbins, 2007a). Those forms are serious, casual, and project-based leisure, briefly defined as follows:

Serious leisure: systematic pursuit of an amateur, hobbyist, or volunteer activity sufficiently substantial, interesting, and fulfilling for the participant to find a (leisure) career there acquiring and expressing a combination of its special skills, knowledge, and experience
Casual leisure: immediately, intrinsically rewarding, relatively short-lived pleasurable activity, requiring little or no special training to enjoy it
Project-based leisure: short-term, reasonably complicated, one-shot or occasional, though infrequent, creative undertaking carried out in free time, or time free of disagreeable obligation

Although it was never the author's intention as he moved over the years from one study of free-time activity to another, his findings and theoretic musings have nevertheless evolved and coalesced into a typological map of the world of leisure (see Fig. 1.1).

That is, so far as can be determined at present, all leisure (at least in Western society) may be classified according to one of these three forms and their several

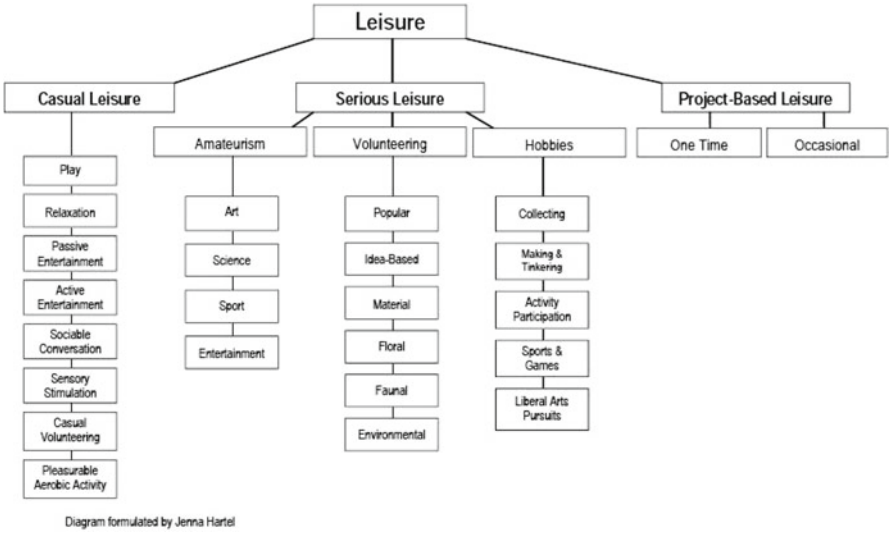

Fig. 1.1 The serious leisure perspective (Types explained in: Stebbins, 2007a, pp. 6–10, 38–39, 45–47, 2007b. Source: www.seriousleisure.net)

types and subtypes. More precisely, the serious leisure perspective offers a classification and explanation of all leisure activity and experience, as these two are framed in the social-psychological, social, cultural, and historical contexts in which the activity and experience take place.

Serious Leisure

It is now time to add to the foregoing definition. Thus, amateurs are distinguished from hobbyists by the fact that the first, because they are found in art, science, sport, and entertainment, have a professional counterpart, whereas the second do not. Some hobbyists, however, have commercial counterparts. Their five subtypes are set out in Fig. 1.1. Participants in activities include people who hunt, canoe, gather mushrooms, and watch birds. Hobbyist players of sports and games lack professional counterparts. The liberal arts hobbies are based on self-education in an area of life or literature. Serious leisure volunteers offer uncoerced, altruistic help either formally or informally with no or, at most, token pay and done for the benefit of both other people (beyond the volunteer's family) and the volunteer. The six subtypes of volunteers presented in Fig. 1.1 are discussed in Stebbins (2009, pp.11–12).

All serious leisure is further defined by six distinguishing qualities (Stebbins, 2007a). One is the occasional need to persevere, such as in learning how to be a capable museum guide. Yet, it is clear that positive feelings about the activity come, to some extent, from sticking with it through thick and thin, from conquering adversity. A second quality is

that of finding a career in the serious leisure role, 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, experience, or skill, and, indeed, all four at times. Fourth, several durable benefits, or broad outcomes, of serious leisure have so far been identified, mostly from research on amateurs. They are self-development, 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 is that of self-gratification, or the combination of superficial enjoyment and deep fulfillment. Of these benefits, self-fulfillment – realizing, or the fact of having realized, to the fullest one's gifts and character, one's potential – is the most powerful of all.

A fifth quality of serious leisure is the unique ethos that grows up around each instance of it. A central component of this ethos is its special social world in which participants pursue their free-time interests. Unruh (1980) developed the following definition:

> A *social world* must be seen as a unit of social organization which is diffuse and amorphous in character. Generally larger than groups or organizations, social worlds are not necessarily defined by formal boundaries, membership lists, or spatial territory.… A social world must be seen as an internally recognizable constellation of actors, organizations, events, and practices which have coalesced into a perceived sphere of interest and involvement for participants. Characteristically, a social world lacks a powerful centralized authority structure and is delimited by.… effective communication and not territory nor formal group membership.

The sixth quality rests around the preceding five: participants in serious leisure tend to identify strongly with their chosen pursuits.

These six qualities have commonly been used to separate serious from casual leisure. This procedure is required when studying a leisure activity for the first time, since it is by no means always evident at first glance whether it is serious, casual, or project-based. A comparison of serious and casual leisure along the lines of the six qualities is available in Stebbins (2007a).

Motivation

Furthermore, certain rewards and costs come with pursuing a hobbyist, amateur, or volunteer activity. Both implicitly and explicitly much of serious leisure theory rests on the following assumption: to understand the positiveness of such leisure for those who pursue it is in significant part to understand their motivation for the pursuit. Moreover, one fruitful approach to understanding the motives that lead to serious leisure participation is to study them through the eyes of the participants who, past studies reveal (Arai & Pedlar, 1997; Stebbins, 1992, Chap. 6, 1996, 1998), see it as a mix of offsetting costs and rewards experienced in the central activity. The rewards of

this activity tend to outweigh the costs, however, the result being that the participants usually find a high level of personal fulfillment in them.

The rewards of a serious leisure pursuit are the more or less routine values that attract and hold its enthusiasts. Every serious leisure career both frames and is framed by the continuous search for these rewards, a search that takes months, and in some fields years, before the participant consistently finds deep satisfaction in his or her amateur, hobbyist, or volunteer role. Ten rewards have so far emerged in the course of the various exploratory studies of amateurs, hobbyists, and career volunteers. As the following list shows, the rewards are predominantly personal;

Personal rewards

1. Personal enrichment (cherished experiences)
2. Self-actualization (developing skills, abilities, knowledge)
3. Self-expression (expressing skills, abilities, knowledge already developed)
4. Self-image (known to others as a particular kind of serious leisure participant)
5. Self-gratification (combination of superficial enjoyment and deep fulfillment)
6. Re-creation (regeneration) of oneself through serious leisure after a day's work
7. Financial return (from a serious leisure activity)

Social rewards

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

Further, every serious leisure activity contains its own costs – a distinctive combination of tensions, dislikes, and disappointments – which each participant confronts in his or her special way. Tensions and dislikes develop within the activity or through its imperfect mesh with work, family, and other leisure interests. Put more precisely, the goal of gaining fulfillment in serious leisure is the drive to experience the rewards of a given leisure activity, such that its costs are seen by the participant as more or less insignificant by comparison. This is at once the positive meaning of the activity for the participant and that person's motivation for engaging in it. It is this motivational sense of the concept of reward that distinguishes it from the idea of durable benefit set out earlier, an idea that emphasizes outcomes rather than antecedent conditions.

Nonetheless, the two ideas constitute two sides of the same social-psychological coin. Moreover, this brief discussion shows that some positive psychological states may be founded, to some extent, on particular negative, often noteworthy, conditions (e.g., tennis elbow, frostbite [in cross-country skiing], stage fright, frustration [in acquiring a collectable, learning a part]). Such conditions intensify the senses of achievement and self-fulfillment even more as the enthusiast succeeds in conquering adversity.

Thrills and Psychological Flow

Thrills are part of this reward system. Thrills, or high points, are the sharply exciting events and occasions that stand out in the minds of those who pursue a kind of serious leisure. In general, they tend to be associated with the rewards of self-enrichment and, to a lesser extent, those of self-actualization and self-expression. That is, thrills in serious leisure may be seen as situated manifestations of certain more abstract rewards; they are what participants in some fields seek as concrete expressions of the rewards they find there. They are important, in substantial part, because they motivate the participant to stick with the pursuit in hope of finding similar experiences again and again and because they demonstrate that diligence and commitment may pay off.

Over the years, a number of thrills have been identified that come with the serious leisure activities that have been studied. These thrills are exceptional instances of the flow experience. Thus, although the idea of flow originated with the work of Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (1990), and has therefore an intellectual history quite separate from that of serious leisure, it does nevertheless happen, depending on the activity, that it is a key motivational force there. For example, it was found that flow was highly prized in the hobbies of kayaking, mountain/ice climbing, and snowboarding (Stebbins, 2005c). What then is flow?

The intensity with which some participants approach their leisure suggests that, there, they may at times be in psychological flow. Flow, a form of optimal experience, is possibly the most widely discussed and studied generic intrinsic reward in the psychology of work and leisure. Although many types of work and leisure generate little or no flow for their participants, those that do are found chiefly in the devotee occupations and serious leisure. Still, it appears that each work and leisure activity capable of producing flow does so in terms unique to it. And it follows that each of these activities must be carefully studied to discover the properties contributing to the distinctive flow experience it offers.

Casual Leisure

There are eight types of casual leisure (see Fig. 1.1). The last and newest addition to this typology – pleasurable aerobic activity – refers to physical activities that require effort sufficient to cause marked increase in respiration and heart rate (Stebbins, 2004a). Here, reference is to "aerobic activity" in the broad sense, to all activity that calls for such effort. Thus, the concept includes the routines pursued collectively in (narrowly conceived of) aerobics classes and those pursued individually by way of televised or video-taped programs of aerobics. Yet, as with its passive and active cousins in entertainment, pleasurable aerobic activity is, at bottom, casual leisure. That is, to do such activity requires little more than minimal skill, knowledge, or experience.

Project-Based Leisure

Whereas systematic exploration may reveal others, two types of project-based leisure have so far been identified: one-off projects and occasional projects (Stebbins, 2005a).

One-Off Projects

In all these projects, people generally use the talents and knowledge they have at hand, even though for some projects they may seek beforehand certain instructions. This may include reading a book or taking a short course. And some projects may require a modicum of preliminary conditioning. Always the goal is to undertake successfully the one-off project and nothing more, and sometimes, a small amount of background preparation is necessary for this. It is possible that a survey would show that most project-based leisure is hobbyist in character, while its next most common type is a distinctive kind of volunteering. First, the following hobbyist-like projects have so far been identified:

- Making and tinkering:
  - Interlacing, interlocking, and knot-making from kits.
  - Other kit assembly projects (e.g., stereo tuner, craft store projects).
  - Do-it-yourself projects done primarily for fulfillment, some of which may even be undertaken with minimal skill and knowledge (e.g., build a rock wall or a fence, finish a room in the basement, plant a special garden). This could turn into an irregular series of such projects, spread over many years. They might even transform the participant into a hobbyist.
- Liberal arts:
  - Genealogy (not as ongoing hobby)
  - Tourism: special trip, not as part of an extensive personal tour program, to visit different parts of a region, a continent, or much of the world
- Activity participation: long backpacking trip, canoe trip; one-off mountain ascent (e.g., Fuji, Rainier, Kilimanjaro)

One-off volunteering projects are also common, though possibly somewhat less so than hobbyist-like projects. And less common than either are the amateur-like projects, which appear to concentrate in the sphere of theater.

- Volunteering
  - Volunteer at a convention or conference, whether local, national, or international in scope
  - Volunteer at a sporting competition, whether local, national, or international in scope

  - Volunteer at an arts festival or special exhibition mounted in a museum
  - Volunteer to help restore human life or wildlife after a natural or human-made disaster caused by, for instance, a hurricane, earthquake, oil spill, or industrial accident
- Entertainment theater: produce a skit (a form of sketch) or one-off community pageant; create a puppet show; prepare a home film or a set of videos, slides, or photos; prepare a public talk.

Occasional Projects

Preliminary observation suggests that occasional projects are more likely than their one-off cousins to originate in or be motivated by agreeable obligation. Examples of occasional projects include the sum of the culinary, decorative, or other creative activities undertaken, for example, at home or at work for a religious occasion or someone's birthday. Likewise, national holidays and similar celebrations sometimes inspire individuals to mount occasional projects consisting of an ensemble of inventive elements.

Occupational Devotion

Such work has been conceptualized as "devotee work," involvement in which is fired by "occupational devotion" (Stebbins, 2004b). There is in the West a small proportion of the working population who find it difficult to separate their work and leisure. These workers, for whom the line between the two domains is blurred, do rely on their work as a livelihood, but nevertheless are also "occupational devotees." That is, they feel a powerful occupational devotion or strong, positive attachment to a form of self-enhancing work, where the sense of achievement is high and the core activity is endowed with such intense appeal that the line between this work and leisure is virtually erased. Further, it is by way of the core activity of their work that devotees realize a unique combination of, what are for them, strongly seated cultural values (Williams, 2000, p. 146): success, achievement, freedom of action, individual personality, and activity (being involved in something). Other categories of workers may also be animated by some, even all, of these values, but fail for various reasons to realize them in gainful employment.

Occupational devotees turn up chiefly, though not exclusively, in four areas of the economy, providing their work there is, at most, only lightly bureaucratized: certain small businesses, the skilled trades, the consulting and counseling occupations, and the public- and client-centered professions. Public-centered professions are found in the arts, sports, scientific, and entertainment fields, while those that are client-centered abound in such fields as law, teaching, accounting, and medicine (Stebbins, 1992, p. 22). It is assumed in all this that the work and its core activity to

which people become devoted carries with it a respectable personal and social identity within their reference groups, since it would be difficult, if not impossible, to be devoted to work that those groups regarded with scorn. Still, positive identification with the job is not a defining condition of occupational devotion, since such identification can develop for other reasons, including high salary, prestigious employer, and advanced educational qualifications.

The fact of devotee work for some people and its possibility for others signals that work, as one of life's domains, may be positive. Granted, most workers are not fortunate enough to find such work. For those who do find it, the work meets six criteria (Stebbins, 2004b, p. 9). To generate occupational devotion:

1. The valued core activity must be profound; to perform it, acceptability requires substantial skill, knowledge, or experience or a combination of two or three of these.
2. The core must offer significant variety.
3. The core must also offer significant opportunity for creative or innovative work, as a valued expression of individual personality. The adjectives "creative" and "innovative" stress that the undertaking results in something new or different, showing imagination and application of routine skill or knowledge. That is, boredom is likely to develop only after the onset of fatigue experienced from long hours on the job, a point at which significant creativity and innovation are no longer possible.
4. The would-be devotee must have reasonable control over the amount and disposition of time put into the occupation (the value of freedom of action), such that he can prevent it from becoming a burden. Medium and large bureaucracies have tended to subvert this criterion. For in interest of the survival and development of their organization, managers have felt they must deny their nonunionized employees this freedom and force them to accept stiff deadlines and heavy workloads. But no activity, be it leisure or work, is so appealing that it invites unlimited participation during all waking hours.
5. The would-be devotee must have both an aptitude and a taste for the work in question. This is, in part, a case of one man's meat being another's poison. John finds great fulfillment in working as a physician, an occupation that holds little appeal for Jane who, instead, adores being a lawyer (work John finds unappealing).
6. The devotees must work in a physical and social milieu that encourages them to pursue often and without significant constraint the core activity. This includes avoidance of excessive paperwork, caseloads, class sizes, market demands, and the like.

Sounds ideal, if not idealistic, but in fact, occupations and work roles exist that meet these criteria. In today's climate of occupational deskilling, over-bureaucratization, and similar impediments to fulfilling core activity at work, many people find it difficult to locate or arrange devotee employment. The six criteria just listed also characterize serious leisure (see Stebbins, 2004b, Chap. 4), which gives further substance to the claim being put forward here that such leisure and devotee work occupy a great deal of common ground.

Although exceptions exist (see Stebbins, 2004b, Chap. 5), a large majority of today's devotee occupations actually owe their existence in one way or another to one or more serious leisure precursors. Thus, every professional field in art, science, sport, and entertainment made its debut with a gang of enthusiastic amateurs who pioneered the way. In all these areas, the love for the core activity got its start in free time. Furthermore, hobbyists may find a livelihood in a craft or small business that commercializes their serious leisure interest. Finally, among organizational volunteers are those who use their altruistic role to explore for work in a particular segment of the job market. Sometimes, these "marginal volunteers" (Stebbins, 2001, pp. 4–6) hope to find employment by this route, accomplished by gaining experience that will improve their chances of getting work in that field or a related one. On the other hand, pure organizational volunteers – those who serve primarily for the fulfillment derived from executing attractive core tasks – may be hired to fill a remunerative post in their organization that generates occupational devotion. One such post is volunteer coordinator. A number of social workers, registered nurses, and recreational specialists got started this way.

Conclusions

We have been examining a number of the social sciences where positiveness has been formally introduced (psychology, sociology) or where it has been informally, if not unwittingly, explored without reference to this concept (e.g., history, geography). Unwitting exploration has gone farthest in library and information science. We may say that positiveness is an inherent part of all the fields so far examined here and that their focus on certain problems and their need for description falls well short of fully analyzing the phenomena on which each centers. The argument in this chapter has been that all these disciplines should follow the lead of psychology and now sociology and give full recognition to the positive side of life, without to be sure, dropping interest in its problematic and descriptive sides. It should be clear in this recommendation that there is, in no way, any attempt to deny the importance of the problems, be they rampant drug addiction, growing domestic violence, persistent poverty, enduring labor conflict, to mention a few. But it is an attempt to point out as forcefully as possible the fact that leisure, a main font of positiveness, is an inherent part of all these academic specialties.

Note, however, that several social scientific fields have grown up around a particular set of problems and their suggested solutions. Here, practitioners have a mandate to be negative – to solve problems – a mandate given to them, in part, by the societies in which they work and play and, in part, emerging from their own proclivities. These include fields as diverse as social work, criminology, therapeutic recreation, gender studies, arts administration, and nonprofit sector studies. Problem solving is an inherent part of each, while positiveness is not. But, even here, the latter can be grafted on to the former. This has already been done in arts administration and the role of volunteers there (e.g., Graham, 2004; Stebbins, 2005b) and therapeutic

recreation (e.g., Patterson, 1997). In nonprofit sector studies, volunteering, to the extent that it is conceived of as leisure, injects an element of positiveness into this field (for a partial summary of research and theory on volunteering as leisure, see Stebbins, 1996).

The study of positiveness in the social sciences is alive, although not always well. Yet, the time has come to formally recognize its importance throughout this cluster of disciplines. One cardinal reason for doing so is that people in the West are interested in the positive side of life, even if most of contemporary social science is not. And to the extent that this interest is growing, leisure – claimed earlier in this chapter to be today's only "happy science" – will be well positioned, both theoretically and practically, to shed light and offer services on matters about which these people care a great deal.

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Chapter 2
Redeeming Leisure in Later Life

Douglas A. Kleiber

The relationship between leisure and successful aging is the general subject of this chapter, but more specifically it will address the positive reconstruction of leisure for people adapting to the often challenging circumstances of later life. Whatever it means to age successfully—a subject to be considered shortly—it is relatively easy to see the relevance of leisure. People who use the free time they have available to express themselves actively and to interact with others in personally meaningful and enjoyable ways are capitalizing on leisure to age successfully by almost any definition. Such a pattern is made possible by having adequate physical, psychological, and financial resources and, even more specifically, by maintaining patterns of involvement (engaged attention) that have been meaningful for many years. Thus, as others have argued (see, e.g., McGuire, Boyd, & Tedrick, 2005; McPherson, 1991), we recognize ways in which people maintain, or even enhance, a sense of competence in a wide variety of activities (such as golf, woodworking, collecting) about which they are passionate and through which they remain connected with others. For many, such patterns have defined much if not all of their adult life and serve them well as convoys of successful aging. But that group has received more than their share of attention in the past. Besides, research on that accomplished and active group often leaves us with the question, Are they happier, healthier, and better adjusted because they make good use of leisure or is active use of leisure merely a by-product of good mental and physical health? In any case, they are the fortunate ones.

The concern here is rather with two other groups: (1) the unlucky ones, those whose lives have been troubled by limitation and loss, and (2) those who have never in their lives made much of leisure and come to old age not only with the reasonable

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To be able to fill leisure intelligently is the last product of civilization. Bertrand Russell (1872–1970)

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expectation of loss but with little effective use of leisure to fall back on. Although the fortunate ones may be the more celebrated—since they are often seen as exemplars of successful aging—they are far less common than those of the other two groups, even in postindustrial societies. We will also turn in this chapter to the way various conceptualizations of leisure play out in later life and consider them in relation to the two groups of interest. First, though, we begin with what is meant by successful aging, with attention to both processes and purposes, and how leisure might be relevant.

Successful Aging

Rather than viewing successful aging as requiring functional fitness, lack of disease, and social integration as some have done (e.g., Rowe & Kahn, 1998; see also Phelan & Larson, 2002, for a review), successful aging can be viewed as effectively adapting to conditions, both psychological and socio-environmental, *regardless of how favorable*, and making the best of them, revising and refining both means and ends as necessary to live well in the present. This view is best represented in the popular model called "selective optimization with compensation" (Baltes & Baltes, 1990).

Selective Optimization with Compensation

The selective optimization with compensation (SOC) model (Baltes & Baltes, 1990, 1998; Baltes & Carstensen, 1996; Freund & Baltes, 1998, 2002) takes account of the losses that accompany aging and the manner of adaptation to these losses that is most effective in maintaining and enhancing quality of life. Essentially, the SOC model argues that it is adaptive and healthy to respond to the limiting factors in the environment, especially as they mount with the losses accompanying aging, by being *selective* about activities of choice, abandoning those that are less personally meaningful, and *compensating* in whatever way necessary to *optimize* the more restricted number of alternatives. Baltes and Carstensen point out that "in their orchestration 'these three processes' generate and regulate development and aging" (p. 218). Selection is the process of reducing the number of activity domains to those that are most important. Ceasing, abandoning, or eliminating activities that have been practiced for some time is often accompanied by some regret, but it allows for a reprioritization of other activities, usually along a continuum of what is most personally meaningful. As a process that has been found to be important to adaptation in later life, it gives new meaning and value to the concept of disengagement. If and when disengagement is voluntary, it may be adaptive in preserving integrity and well-being and enhancing the prospect for optimizing other higher priority activities. But even when it is involuntary—as with a physically disabling illness—the cognitive reappraisal that takes place may be ultimately liberating.

Compensation is a process that has the effect of preserving involvement in a preferred activity, in spite of emerging constraints. Lang, Rieckmann, and Baltes (2002) use the example of a preference for tennis that, in the face of the constraining effects of declining mobility and strength, might result in the elimination of other strenuous physical activities to make playing tennis both more likely and more satisfying, but turning to a larger racquet face and learning shot placement strategies less reliant on physical strength and power would also be mechanisms of compensation that preserve the opportunity for effective engagement. As another example, consider the impact of failing eyesight on driving for pleasure. Rather than abandoning car touring all together, finding companions (with good eyesight!) with whom to share such experience preserves the opportunity for car travel—even enhancing the prospects for visual exposure given freedom of attention from driving itself—while also affording a new dimension of companionship. As with the tennis example above, compensation in this way serves to actually optimize the experience. In summarizing their analysis of the SOC model, Baltes and Baltes (1998) note that "By careful selection, optimization, and compensation we are able to minimize the negative consequences from losses that occur with old age and to work on aspects of growth and new peaks of success, albeit in a more restricted range" (p. 17). "Making smaller territories of life larger and more beautiful is at the core of savoir vivre in old age" (p. 19).

Adaptation and Purpose

As noted, the SOC model presents successful aging as adaptation and thus puts the emphasis on process rather than outcome, distinguishing it from other interpretations that see successful aging as a status achieved with certain characteristics. In a sense, then, the SOC model is better adapted not only to those individuals who do not enjoy favorable circumstances but also to the vast range of value and cultural differences in what are the ideal outcomes of aging. This avoids some of the more normative and ethnocentrically biased views associated with writing on successful aging that have been roundly criticized. Nevertheless, it is important to note that adaptation is never value neutral, and goals do indeed reflect cultural values toward which selection, optimization, and compensation are directed. And, cultural variations notwithstanding, some of the most common purposes can be identified. Specifically, research suggests that the ideologies of *independence*, *growth, competence, connectedness, contribution to the future*, and *peace* have a strong hold on the decisions and adjustments made in later life, regardless of circumstances.

For Erik Erikson (1963, 1982), perhaps the best known Western theorist of psychosocial development, the principal motives of later life are generativity and personal integration, purposes that he asserted to be pancultural (though gender differences in the timing and manner of expression have lead to criticisms of the male bias in his original formulation [e.g., Miller-McLemore, 2004]). Generativity involves the purpose of contributing to the well-being of successive generations. It is expressed in

parenting as well as "through various kinds of activities and enterprises in churches, schools, neighborhoods, communities, organizations and society writ large" (McAdams & Logan, 2004, p. 16). Thus, it is expressed in mentoring, teaching, volunteer work, charitable activity, religious involvement and political activity, in "… promoting society's traditions, taking on the responsibilities of good citizenship, even paying taxes" (p. 16). Associated as it is with *positive, healthy* adult development, it is not inevitable in the course of aging. Nor is it inherently associated with civic engagement. It is manifest in private as well as public ways, as in tending to one's own family and/or one's estate and financial legacy. It is also reflected in one's historically transcendent creativity—as in seeking to leave a mark with a book of poems or photographs—such motives having only an indirect concern for community.

Ego integration, the purpose that seems to follow that of generativity developmentally, as the last purpose of life, is presented by Erikson as coming to be acceptant of one's life as lived and reconciled with the state of the world and one's place within it. Ego integrity is the feeling of wholeness one achieves in making sense of one's life. Some degree of retrospective understanding is implied, but continuity of interests and experience is incorporated as well.

From Erikson's point of view, effectively addressing the tasks of generativity and ego integration would represent essential fulfillment in adult life, but others have argued for alternative purposes. With due appreciation to Erikson for his lifespan framework, several theorists (Antonovsky & Sagy, 1990; Vaillant, 2002) have nonetheless insisted that there is an early aging transition that brings up issues different from those of advanced old age and different from the period of generativity that preceded it. People are not only living longer than when Erikson advanced his lifespan model, they are healthier as well (Agahi & Parker, 2005). Also, in many contemporary societies, the attitudes of the cohort now reaching retirement—the "baby boomers" in the USA—include a greater preference for change and growth experience than previous cohorts, thus insuring differences in later life for years to come (Dychtwald & Flower, 1990; Freedman, 1999).

Although the age of retirement has shifted in both directions for social and economic reasons over time, and the retirement period tends to be marked by continuity more than change, there appear to be some important tasks that face members of most industrialized societies around this time (60–75). According to Antonovsky and Sagy (1990), the early period of later life asks that a person consider four questions: (1) What is to be *done*? (a question of engagement); (2) What is *personally* worth doing? (a matter of reevaluation of life satisfaction); (3) What do I still believe about my world? (a reevaluation of world view with concern for coherence of purpose and approach to life); and (4) How can I stay healthy enough to do what I want? (which takes into account one's health vulnerability).

Having followed a cohort of men and women for over 50 years, George Vaillant (2002) came to a similar conclusion about the young-old period being one of activity; but he found more emphasis on play and self-expression, irrespective of socioeconomic status, among those who were thriving subsequent to retirement. With respect to retirement itself, his evidence suggested that it is only a problem when (1) it is involuntary or unplanned, (2) there is no other means of support besides salary,

(3) when home life is unhappy, or (4) when it has precipitated by preexisting bad health. When those do not apply, most people look for intrinsic satisfaction in their activities, replacing workmates with other social networks, rediscovering how to play, exercising creativity, continuing to learn, and serving others in ways that are personally satisfying.

The views of Vaillant and Antonovsky and Sagy also raise issues with the assumptions of a preference for continuity and stability in later life, particularly in the case of the young-old (the third as opposed to the fourth age) and especially where growth is still an interest. Enhancement of competence and refinement of skills may favor optimization of existing skills around preferred and familiar activities, but selection (with prioritizing and disengagement from some activities) does not preclude the exploration of new possibilities and the learning of new skills. Indeed, innovation may be the prevailing theme for many in the earlier phases of retirement as evidence has shown (Nimrod, 2008; Nimrod & Kleiber, 2007). Even those without abundant resources and with significant challenges and limitations may be brought by circumstances to the point that change is the answer. Helen Lopata (1993) observed from her studies of widows that many of them "blossom" after the loss of their husbands, as if it becomes an opportunity for responding to new possibilities and becoming something other than what one was, whether reflected in new activities or new relationships with others.

Finally, it is important to identify those purposes that *diminish* in importance with age. Achievement that requires deferral of gratification or the social connections that are instrumental to becoming established become part of what is abandoned from midlife on. This was reflected in the findings of Carstensen and colleagues (Carstensen, 1993; Carstensen, Fung, & Charles, 2003; Carstensen, Isaacowitz, & Charles, 1999) that making new contacts for what they might bring in the future was inconsistent with a more limited time horizon. Daniel Levinson and his colleagues noted earlier (1978) that a man who traverses the life event of retirement: "… has earned the right to be and do what is most important to himself. He is beyond distinctions between work and play. He can devote himself in a serious playful way to the interests that flow most directly from the depths of the self" (p. 36). And Carstensen's work demonstrates that simply because life is itself limited, a sense of finitude and mortality turn one's attention toward optimizing the present (cf. Carstensen, 1993; Carstensen et al., 1999).

Similarly, in his theory of *gerotranscendence*, Lars Tornstam (2005) argues that the wisdom of age is reflected in the end of striving and the relinquishing of superficial relationships and material accumulation that is associated with self-aggrandizement. Nevertheless, he eschews Erikson's "backward-looking" ego integration model in favor of a new cosmology where self-preoccupation ends and one accepts oneself as being part of the stream of life, past, present, and future. He suggests that ideally there is "a shift in metaperspective—from a materialistic and rational perspective to a more cosmic and transcendent one, normally followed by an increase in life satisfaction" (p. 41) which also includes a decrease in fear of death, superfluous social interactions, and self-centeredness and an increase in reflection and "communion with the universe." He also notes that such perspective

transformation might be accelerated by a life crisis, after which the individual "totally restructures his/her metaworld instead of being resigned to the former one" (p. 39). He sees the prevailing orthodoxy of Western society that interprets health and well-being only in terms of activity, productivity, independence, and sociability as actually obstructing such transformation. The lessons from dealing with loss—as we will see shortly—tell us about the importance of finding ways to be peaceful and appreciative of life in the moment, and clearly this is a classical and ideal meaning of leisure (see especially Pieper, 1963).

The point in bringing up these purposes here (generativity, ego integration, self-expression, social reintegration, and self-transcendence) as later life purposes is to suggest that if leisure is to be meaningful and valuable in later life, it may need to be redefined and reconstructed in service of such purposes to be of any real value.

Redeeming Leisure

The idea of redeeming leisure would sound strange and unpalatable to some leisure scholars. The Western intellectual traditions for defining leisure as an ideal condition of life see it as being about self-expression, self-perfection and satisfying and creative social intercourse (cf. deGrazia, 1962; Hemingway, 1988; Pieper, 1963). In this way, it is clearly distinguished from vacuous free time and diverting recreation as a more complete realization of the best of human and cultural potential. Critics of this view of leisure, on the other hand, blame it for the tendency in contemporary leisure studies to regard leisure as only beneficial. This "meliorist" tendency (Rojek, 2001) thus fails to consider those human patterns that are individually and socially destructive but are nevertheless done in the name of fun, entertainment, and enjoyment. In this group, we can certainly put drug and alcohol abuse, some kinds of criminal behavior, and many forms of delinquency and rebellious behavior.

There is also much of free time activity that is simply diversionary—boredom being the primary adversary—with little else to recommend it. Although television watching can be educational and informative, culturally integrative in some respects, and perhaps even a source of companionship in later life, it is a quick and relaxing resource that most typically is associated with low-level cognitive functioning and motivation (Kubey & Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). It is most commonly mindless distraction and diversion. Tourism can also be criticized for being an only slightly more active version of voyeuristic activity than television with little real engagement with the destination (as suggested in the famous expression, "If it's Tuesday, this must be Belgium."), though it too has been used in ways that are more meaningful and personally transformative at times (cf. McCannell, 1992; Rojek, 1993; Wearing, 2002).

For our purposes here, let us take as leisure *all* that is included in free time, that freedom being limited most dramatically by oppressive conditions such as poverty and war, but otherwise being available for any particular use, whatever its merits. As noted, this meaning of leisure could thus include meaningless, decadent, and

even self-destructive activities as well as reflecting burdensome free time associated with ennui and boredom. These would then be characteristics of one's leisure that would make it ripe for redemption in the first sense, that is*, in finding meaningful replacements for activities that are largely dissipative.*

Even as merely free time, leisure may be largely missing, however, as with workaholics or those who are compulsively busy or outcome-oriented. Such patterns beg for correction in later life especially as energy and other physical resources are diminishing and demands are lifted. But the "rest" promised as the reward for all that effort is rarely satisfying to those who have been devoted to work and productivity. Perhaps for this reason, leisure in later life is sometimes regarded as a "con" (Comfort, 1976); the ease and luxury of a "leisurely" retirement as the payoff for a previous lifetime of toil—the fruit of the golden years—is a rather bankrupt representation of later life and fails to address the need for meaningful engagement. Leisure, of course, can be active and meaningful. When the conditions that made work wholly involving and satisfying, such that there was no need to recognize leisure, disappear as a consequence of retirement, leisure may be redeemed in a second sense by *being finally recognized as a valuable part of life and a source of new forms of engagement and meaning*.

Lastly, though, leisure is redeemed in *moving it toward its classical ideals, toward spiritual transcendence and excellence in the refinement of human character and human relationships*. Freedom and opportunity afford the conditions for such redemption, but they do not insure it. Society may provide the conditions for comfort and security to most of its citizens in later life, but having achieved that, they may expect or desire little else. Cultivating opportunities for deeper understanding of life's gifts, for the refinement of individual capacities, or for community building gives leisure back its traditional character and, arguably, its soul.

But again, the purpose here is to reveal the occasions for such patterns not among those who have been so inclined all their lives but among those for whom it would not be expected for various reasons. Important to note is that while some sense of time and opportunity is necessary for virtuous and valuable leisure activity, it requires neither wealth nor good health. Thus, we cast the widest range of possibilities for redeeming leisure in later life in considering those other two groups: (1) those whose lives become troubled in the typical course of aging and (2) those whose lives have been role-bound and unfulfilling throughout adult life.

Lessons Learned from Coping with Trauma and Loss

The losses of later life—illness, loss of spouse, loss of a driver's license, etc.—are significant signs that life will not go on forever and that other losses, particularly physical losses, will start to accumulate. This is predictably daunting and distressing and may lead to a cycle of depression and despair. Depression and suicide are more common among older people than younger age groups (Conwell, 2001). But for those who have suffered some losses earlier in life, subsequent losses may be more

bearable. More importantly, in dealing with loss, one may find the coping skills to make the best of any situation. But in particular, there are signs that leisure is often reconstructed subsequently in ways that make life more rather than less meaningful and more rather than less enjoyable.

Research on negative life events of various kinds, as well as chronic illness, reveals a variety of coping responses. Whether dealing with an accident, an illness, loss of a child, divorce, or any of the other commonly noted serious negative life events, leisure seems almost irrelevant in the early going, although activity, even television watching, soon comes to be useful for the purpose of distraction and diversion. This is a primary reason historically for the inclusion of recreation therapists in treatment teams. And coping theorists increasingly recognize the value of escape as an emotion-focused coping strategy that has value for dealing with trauma (e.g., Folkman & Moskowitz, 2000). But studying adjustment patterns of people who have had spinal cord and traumatic brain injuries as well as victims of sexual assault and divorce, colleagues and I have noted several additional subsequent responses that involve leisure (Kleiber, 2004; Kleiber, Hutchinson, & Williams, 2002). For some, resuming leisure activities of the past is the priority in reconstructing a life narrative that had been seriously disrupted and also in restoring a sense of hope for the future. The spinal cord injury victims we studied were occasionally struck by their renewed ability to respond to the simplest of pleasurable moments such as in the beauty of a sunset or the realization of being able to return to valued activities, such as the woodworker who only needed a modified workbench to return to his passion. For others, however, leisure is a resource for making changes, and some of these changes involve attention to others. For example, there was the athlete who was left paraplegic as a result of an auto accident and after a time found a new identity teaching reading to young children. And even those with chronic health problems in later life often find that change is possible and desirable (cf. Nimrod & Hutchinson, 2010).

Such transformation is also reflected in the work on *posttraumatic growth* and *near-death experience*. There is now a burgeoning literature suggesting that growth—qualitative changes in an individual that bring some level of positive reorganization—may result from trauma under certain conditions (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004). Tedeschi and Calhoun (1996, 2004) define posttraumatic growth as "positive psychological change experienced as a result of the struggle with highly challenging life circumstances." Defining trauma somewhat more broadly than posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) but still that which seems "seismic" in proportion, they examined responses to bereavement, rheumatoid arthritis, cancer, heart attacks, transportation accidents, combat, refugee experience, sexual assault and sexual abuse, medical problems of children, and being taken hostage. In spite of, or perhaps *because of*, the shattering of fundamental assumptions that frequently occurs with such events, people in these circumstances often reach a point where they see and take opportunities to become different, and from their perspectives, *better* people. Using interviews and data from an instrument called the "Posttraumatic Growth Inventory", Tedeschi and Calhoun (1996) identified five basic components of posttraumatic growth: (1) greater appreciation and changed sense of priorities; (2) warmer, more intimate relationships

with others (compassion for others, especially those in similar circumstances); (3) a greater sense of personal strength ("If I can handle this, I can handle anything."); (4) recognition of new possibilities and paths for one's life; and (5) spiritual development (usually a renewed belief in God or something greater than oneself). Comparing it with interpretations of wisdom, they also see PTG as "the ability to balance reflection and action, weigh the known and unknowns of life, be better able to accept some of the paradoxes of life, and to more openly and satisfactorily address the fundamental questions of human existence" (Calhoun & Tedeschi, 1999, p. 21).

Drawing our attention to the first and most ubiquitous of the five components, "greater appreciation and changed priorities" typically manifests itself, according to Tedeschi and Calhoun, in an expanded commitment to living in the present and appreciating the immediate joys that life may bring. This posture is very much in line with a kind of relaxed and joyful openness that has been considered an essential quality of leisure by some (Pieper, 1963; Wilson, 1991). Pieper, for example, asserts that:

> Leisure is an attitude of non-activity, of inward calm, of silence; it means not being "busy" but letting things happen … Leisure is not the attitude of mind of those who actively intervene, but of those who are open to everything … of those who leave the reins loose and who are free and easy themselves. (pp. 51–52)

In addition to appreciation and celebration of the gifts of the moment, this orientation also includes a willingness to commit to a more open-hearted surrender to activities (cf. Harper, 1986), perhaps raising the likelihood of the optimal experience of intense involvement and sustained engagement referred to as "flow" (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). In this sense, then, leisure experience—being able to simply relax and be peaceful and/or celebrating the opportunities for profound engagement in life—would be a manifestation of PTG.

Evidence on near-death experiences (Wrenn-Lewis, 1994, 2004) suggests that an "awakening" generally occurs that makes one more inclined to appreciate "the little things in life," to be more present centered, and to be more interpersonally responsive, predispositions that may provide models for working with people whose negative life events have put them at death's door (e.g., heart attack, cancer, and HIV patients). While these events are more dramatic than some other more mundane losses, they do suggest some of the same processes described earlier in relation to the SOC model (see also Martin & Kleiber, 2005).

Central to the SOC model is the awareness that while aging brings losses, it can also bring gains. Some of what is gained is reflected in clarified priorities to favor those that are most meaningful over those that are routine and unfulfilling. In the socio-emotional realm, this means devoting one's available attention to those others with whom there is the greatest shared meaning and mutual appreciation and the relinquishing of those relationships that have been maintained as a force of habit or for some other vague instrumental purpose (Carstensen, 1993). It is well known that the social circle shrinks with age, but this can be as much by design and intention as by default. Disengaging from unsatisfying leisure activities and relationships, in

favor of those that are more meaningful, with people who are more personally significant, is a kind of redemption of leisure as well (see also Achenbaum & Bengtson, 1994). While the size of the inclusive social circle becomes steadily smaller in later life, the process of selection begins effectively at the point that one becomes aware of a limited future and diminishing capacities. And rather than marking loss alone, we know from research on coping with losses earlier in life that personal growth can come of such changes if adaptation and reorientation occur.

Leisure is redeemed among such individuals—perhaps especially in postindustrial societies defined by a future orientation, productivity, and delay of gratification—in the greater appreciation of the moment, a greater capacity for peacefulness and present centeredness, and a greater capacity to reach out to others. Indeed, full maturation may be reflected in the enhanced capacity to "savor" experience (Bryant & Veroff, 2007), which takes a willingness to shed performance pressures and others' evaluations and discard expectations for achievement and social advance.

Replacing Work

For many who have been seriously invested in work, leisure is often at best a context for relaxation and recovery or for distraction from the stress associated with work. The purposes of work, for meaning and social standing as well as personal gain, justify it as the central and primary life interest, with leisure in a clearly subservient role. The free time of retirement under such circumstances, however burdensome work may have become, is often greeted with some trepidation, a vacancy in time where thoughts of personal obsolescence and impending demise intrude. As such, it may be even more of a burden than work.

What must take place for healthy adaptation in such cases is a new understanding of meaningful engagement, that which is intrinsically motivated rather than extrinsically motivated. Of course, additional work opportunities may follow retirement, but leisure offers the opportunity to reconstruct some work-related values in a way that is more satisfying in an immediate sense. By engagement, I mean here the initiation and continuation of action to sustain current interests and relationships or to establish new ones. It is intentional, purposeful involvement in the world, recreating meaning around familiar activities or creating new experiences for oneself and others. Continuing to serve on the board of a local hospital auxiliary would be an example of continuing engagement, while taking the initiative to recruit a speaker for the association's next meeting might reflect an interest in change. Experimentalism may be less common in later life, but age itself does not bring an end to interest in change and innovation. Indeed, seeing oneself as a learner and as a cultivator of new experience may be an essential self-definition that would be integrated in the course of a life review with everything else. Joan and Erik Erikson, with Helen Kivnick (1986), discuss a wide variety of "vital involvements" including work-related activities (e.g., remodeling, gardening, financial manipulations, grandparenting, educational activities, and the arts). With respect to the latter, they note that older people have

the time for sensory immersion that middle-aged people typically do not; they are inclined to do their utmost to "alert and empower the aging body to remain actively involved" (p. 319).

Engagement is also likely to produce a variety of discrete experiences, from the intense, flow-like experience of committed, effortful application of abilities in preparing a special dinner, to more casual, open-focused attention of a poetry reading. Television watching may be stimulating and involving, but the effort required is limited, and thus it is unlikely to generate any sense of control or competence. Knitting an afghan, gardening, or playing the piano, on the other hand, could bring about the same intense, flow-producing involvement that is associated with high-investment activity at any age.

Activities that have been practiced in this way over many years are especially important to identity, social integration, and subjective well-being (see Kleiber, 1999 for further discussion), but again, we take as our focus those who have not made such use of leisure prior to retirement. The question here then is can vital involvements be initiated at this point in the life course? Research on recent retirees suggests that they can (Nimrod, 2008; Nimrod & Kleiber, 2007; Vaillant, 2002). Innovation theory suggests that new activities that are taken seriously may have some connection to work activities from the past or to past leisure interests that may have been neglected; these have been referred to as "self-preserving" (Nimrod, 2008; Nimrod & Kleiber, 2007). But some people begin entirely new activities with a sense of taking on a new role identity (self-reinvention) and forming new relationships. In some cases, these innovators had little or no meaningful leisure in their lives prior to retirement.

Still, another kind of engagement is that of simply tending differently to the "daily round" of chores. While it might seem misleading to suggest that these are leisure activities, they become enjoyable if done in a leisurely way with some degree of mindfulness and appreciation for the process as well as the outcome. Watering the plants and tending to pets are often described as activities that are more a matter of leisure than work; and as routines, they can be a source of continuity and stability. As with other kinds of engagement, even daily routines can be mood-elevating and distracting from other sources of anxiety, stress, loneliness, and depression. Involvement that requires more intensity, however, is likely to be more growth-producing.

Activity-specific benefits notwithstanding, the greatest impact of activity involvement in later life may come in doing the activities with others. By providing the *connectedness* so important to subjective well-being, the activity itself may be largely irrelevant at times. In fact, research on activity involvement as a contributor to well-being in later life often fails to sort out the effects of social context and the associated relationships whether they be friendships or family (Adams, 1993). According to Adams, actions engaged in together can be important for relationships, even if the activity has little personal significance: the casual structure of many leisure activities often provide the ideal context for self-disclosure, resource exchange, and displays of affection, thus solidifying the relationship. In this sense, shared involvement in any activity may contribute to feelings of connectedness and social reintegration.

The best of both worlds may come in sharing activities that are particularly meaningful to both or all participants. Shared enjoyment may contribute as much to meaningful integration in later life as it does to intimacy in earlier adulthood. Participation in organized social activities such as political action groups, service organizations or churches, and volunteer work contribute significantly to quality of later life (e.g., Musick & Wilson, 2003; Nimrod, 2007; Okun & Michel, 2006). Certainly, connectedness to the community is facilitated by such things. Volunteer work can also be a source of feelings of generativity which in turn provide a basis for ego integration as noted earlier. Volunteer activity and civic engagement offer the opportunity to replace some of the skills utilized in work as well as providing a new context for social integration, as Stebbins (1992) has noted in his writing on volunteerism as serious leisure. Volunteers may not see it as leisure in the sense of pure, self-serving enjoyment, but as a use of freedom for refinement of character and social relations, it surely qualifies. Leisure that may have been previously meaningless, if not missing entirely, is thus redeemed.

What is our evidence of such changes? How often is volunteerism truly meaningful, no less enjoyable? And in suggesting it as a later life alternative, are we simply accommodating to a work ethic that may be compulsive and maladaptive, where one cannot be relaxed in the present without feeling the need to be productive and "busy" (Ekerdt, 1986; Katz, 2000; Tornstam, 2005)? As was noted earlier, Tornstam especially emphasizes the importance of disengagement in the wisdom associated with gerotranscendence. But commitment to serving the community is consistent with both essential human inclinations toward generativity and social integration, that is, it is intrinsically motivated, and also consistent with the best and most ancient traditions of leisure as communitarian. Hemingway (1988) notes that interpretations of Aristotle and other Greek philosophers asserting that true leisure is only about contemplation and the refinement of individual character miss the importance of community in their idealizations. According to Hemingway (see also Maynard & Kleiber, 2005), Aristotle especially extols the virtuous characteristics of the political life and asserts that in reality, social interaction is necessary for the refinement of character. In later life, that social interaction—being engaged with others in "saving the world" in some small way—is a reflection of generativity and a realization of leisure in the best sense.

As noted before, generativity can take many forms from simply having and raising children to writing an epic novel. Volunteer work, political participation, and fund-raising would also be examples of concern for the next generation that respond to generativity needs. What is clear from research on generativity, however, is that it is not just an expression of altruism but also involves a sense of ownership and self-expansion. Indeed, even when heavily communal, most generative acts are effectively vehicles of self-perpetuation and immortality. For example, one of the participants in our study of generativity (Kleiber & Nimrod, 2008) was heavily involved in community work on an island off the east coast of the USA after retiring and demonstrated both his commitment to others as well as his own sense of power and influence in describing his activity: "It's how I spend a lot of my leisure time down there … dealing with island business … because I believe in it; it's an experiment in private conservation."

This dualism—of agency and self-expression versus communion—is as descriptive of earlier periods in the lifespan as it is of middle and later life (cf. Bakan, 1966). But among the young-old, perhaps because of the time that is afforded or the lessons learned from coping with loss, this dialectic has particular existential significance and often involves the redemption of one's own leisure in service to others. Let us turn then from this dialectic as well as the engagement-disengagement, continuity-change, and solitude-connectedness dialectics to contemporary structures that offer prospects for addressing them in growth-producing ways.

Contemporary Possibilities

So what are the possibilities afforded by societies for redeeming leisure in later life in the ways suggested, given that life can be increasingly compromised and leisure may have never been particularly valued or important? There are other possibilities, but consider three in particular: preretirement education, intergenerational civic engagement, and service tourism.

Preretirement Education

Preretirement planning has long been a subject of interest to gerontologists (e.g., Taylor-Carter, Cook, & Weinberg, 1997). How do people prepare for retirement and with what help from others? Mostly efforts toward this end have been oriented to avoiding problems and/or reducing their impact. Thus, they have focused on financial planning and long-term health care, on wills and estates, diet and medication. Leisure occasionally comes up, but it is usually considered only in the context of filling available time and staying busy. Leisure ought to be presented as the *gift* of old age, as the context for spiritual growth and refinement of self rather than as simply pleasure, indulgence, and diversion and as a source of renewal when losses occur.

Many large companies, educational institutions, and even public agencies offer programs for preparing for retirement. The view here, though, is that they ought to be more than informational; they should challenge the work and leisure orientations of prospective retirees, especially where only the outcomes of work are valorized. It would be an ideal opportunity to explore interests and possible directions for meaningful engagement as well as the appropriateness of selective disengagement from activities that are no longer meaningful and satisfying. Indeed, the fact that leisure activity involvement was found to be associated with life satisfaction led Nimrod and Adoni (2006) to assert that, "Developing leisure counseling as part of preretirement programs, on the one hand, and creating more leisure opportunities, on the other, might help [retirees] face the challenge of lavish free time" (p. 627).

Intergenerational Activities

There is now a considerable history, in the USA and elsewhere, for older people to give their attention to the problems of the young. As noted earlier, generativity is reflected not only in one's progeny but also in attending to other younger people who will follow. In addition to the biological and the parental, Kotre (1984) identifies generativity in the "technical," in providing direction and skills to a new generation. This serves the needs of both groups:

> The object of legacy-making is the apprentice, with whom the instructor identifies as a way of reliving past experiences and mastery and extending these experiences into the future. The successor's sense of "industry" (by which Erikson means competence at how to) rekindles and validates the precursor's own. (p. 13)

Logan (1986) refers to this effect as "cogwheeling" with the tasks of the young, where integration into adult society is the priority. There are many examples of this work done under the auspices of churches, but centers for learning in retirement (LIR) or lifelong learning, often found in or near universities in the USA, offer another source of talent that may be exploited in addressing community issues associated with youth at risk. Involving the "young-old" from such organizations would typically elicit generative inclinations and ultimately be a resource gain for the community. In the USA, there is a wide range of examples; one coordinated by Clemson University in South Carolina (Corder, McGuire, & Voelkl, 2004) involved two groups of older adults (one living in a gated community, the other in a long-term care facility) interacting with college students around entrepreneurial skills, health care needs, and cooking. Analysis of experience sampling data indicated that a sense of reciprocity—where all were gaining something—was associated with higher levels of enjoyment and control for all three groups.

Volunteer Tourism

Volunteer tourists are "tourists who, for various reasons, volunteer in an organized way to undertake holidays that may involve aiding or alleviating the material poverty of some groups in society, the restoration of certain environments, or research onto aspects of society or environment" (Wearing, 2002, p. 240). Most of the work on volunteer tourism (e.g., Wearing, 2001, 2002) focuses on youth and thus emphasizes the role of helping experience in skill development and identity formation; but in noting that it provides a dramatic alternative to some of the failings of other kinds of tourism, it offers possibilities for the redemption of leisure for other age groups as well. Wearing notes that past writers (e.g., Rojek, 1993) have acknowledged tourism as "culturally sanctioned escape" while volunteer tourism suggests a different model, one based on interaction and negotiation of meanings within the host destination. Tourism is often criticized for perpetuating

inequality and being exploitive, confirming the dependent and subordinate position of the receiving cultures in a kind of neocolonialism that commodifies travel and tourism, and perpetuating rather than reducing stereotypes (McCannell, 1992). But volunteer tourism or "voluntourism" as some have called it (Gardner, 2000), changes that to some extent. It moves from the prevailing characters of tourists as escapist "gazers" (Urry, 1990) or wanderers, realizing little enduring effect of the experience, to one where the sense of self is significantly transformed. As with other kinds of "alternative tourism"—such as adventure tourism or eco-tourism—volunteer tourism can be more psychologically engaging, but in being focused on change, improvement, and discovery, the effects are likely to be far more profound than just having an experience.

Stebbins (Personal communication, 2006) notes that a critical motive for volunteer tourism is *altruism* but that it is challenged at the same time by self-interest:

> This attitude is an essential part of being a volunteer of any sort, and serves in tourism as an antidote (to a significant extent) to exploitative behavior. Still, these senior volunteers are also tourists; so "self-interest" enters as another attitude, which however, has to be harmonized with altruism where any conflict between the two emerges. Moreover tourism is fundamentally leisure, which as an experience, is interpreted according to these two attitudes. This give-and-take between altruism and self-interest sets volunteering in its many forms apart from other forms of leisure, where self-interest is the dominant orientation and altruism is a minor consideration or simply irrelevant.

And certainly for the young-old anyway, taking on the challenges of communities in developing countries in really hearing and responding to the needs of members of the receiving culture may well contribute to a sense of generativity. Gardner (2000), points out that "giving back" is one of the prominent motives that differentiate seniors from other volunteer groups.

Summary and Conclusion

Leisure is redeemed in later life in at least three ways—in abandoning and replacing meaningless activities; in being discovered as a context for meaningful engagement after being underutilized; and in recovering the classical ideals of refinement of character, culture building, and spiritual transcendence. It is an ideal context for the expression of dialectical adaptation, with agency and communion, engagement and disengagement, and continuity and change yielding to each other in ways that may be both growth-producing and self-preserving while also being responsive to the limitations that later life presents.

Importantly, leisure is not only a resource of time or activity for the affluent and healthy; indeed, it may be redeemed more readily by those who have experienced challenging and difficult circumstances. They especially may have recognized the gift of leisure as a source of appreciation, alternative engagement, and connection to others. Leisure's subtlety, complexity, and potential are thus optimally reflected in a dialectic of engagement and disengagement, where the latter leads to true, peaceful relaxation and appreciation for life in the moment rather than alienation, while the former replaces death defying disquiet and busyness with meaningful and enriching activity.

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Part II
Leisure, Growth and Development

Chapter 3
Adolescent Leisure from a Developmental and Prevention Perspective

Linda L. Caldwell and Monique Faulk

Introduction

This chapter will examine adolescent leisure from a prevention perspective and will cover two main topics. First, we will address the paradox of how leisure may contribute to adolescent development, health, and well-being but how it also may be a context for risk behavior. Next, we will take a prevention perspective and address the need for leisure education as a means to promote development, health, and well-being and prevent risk behavior. In addressing these two broad topics, we will review current literature and suggest where gaps in knowledge currently exist.

Leisure as a Context for Adolescent Development

Leisure is a powerful context in which adolescent development may occur due to its unique elements as compared to other contexts in an adolescent's life (e.g., school or work). Larson and Verma (1999) observed that:

> Each activity context … is associated with a distinctive matrix of socialization experiences, positive and negative, and the amount of time a population of children spends in that activity provides a rough index of their degree of exposure to, engagement with, and absorption of those experiences. (p. 702)

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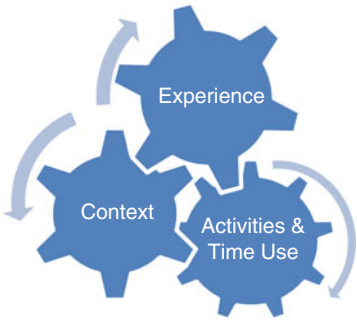

Fig. 3.1 Leisure activities-context-experience (LACE) model

At the same time, as a context of relative freedom, decreased direct parental control, and increased importance of and access to peers, leisure also affords opportunities to engage in risk behaviors such as vandalism, sexual risk, and substance misuse.

From a developmental perspective, positive leisure is likely to contribute to adolescent identity and autonomy development, academic achievement, and development of competence and initiative (Coatsworth, Palen, Sharp, & Ferrer-Wreder, 2006; Eccles, Barber, Stone, & Hunt, 2003; Haggard & Williams, 1992; Jacobs, Vernon, & Eccles, 2005; Larson & Walker, 2005; Mahoney, Harris, & Eccles, 2006). It is also a context to promote physical, cognitive, social, emotional, and spiritual health and well-being.

One model to understand adolescent development through leisure is the leisure activity-context-experience (LACE) model (Caldwell, 2005), which helps unpack the distinct elements in the matrix of leisure. Elements in the model also help to explain why some leisure is risky. The LACE model (see Fig. 3.1) suggests that the combination of activity, context, and experiential quality interacts to produce positive or negative leisure experiences. Activities are things done in free time, such as swimming or hanging out with friends. Context refers to situational features surrounding the activity such as presence or absence of adults and opportunities for leadership. Experience represents the way that an adolescent responds to the activity and can include joy, happiness, excitement, boredom, stress, or fear (as examples).

Activity

In the LACE model, leisure activities are very important due to the inherent characteristics that contribute to adolescent development. Adolescents who participate in activities that are self-defining and expressive (e.g., related to goals, foster flow experiences) are more likely to experience well-being and greater internal assets (Coatsworth et al., 2006). Some researchers have suggested that individuals likely select activities based on their own sense of identity (Haggard & Williams, 1992). More work is needed to understand directionality and the extent to which identity

formation might be an outcome of or motivator to activity participation and leisure experiences.

It is somewhat difficult to form a consensus on outcomes associated with activity participation because it is very difficult to classify leisure activity engagement. Although it may appear that the issue is straightforward, classifying activities is extremely complex, and thus, it is one of the biggest challenges in research on adolescent leisure. Activities have been categorized differently within and across cultures, with most attempts to classify activities using one or more of the following elements to organize the classification schema: frequency, intensity, type of activity, characteristics of the activity, seasonality, location of activity, and personal meaning. Another group of research studies has focused more on the role of adults in structuring activities. These studies compare activities typed as structured, formal, or organized, with activities typed as unstructured, informal, and casual. Commercial leisure is sometimes another category. Other research compares active versus passive time use.

Activity classification is important because it allows one to ask the right research questions and make meaningful statements about outcomes associated with activities and time use. Yet, because there is no common language within or across cultures, comparisons are extremely difficult to make, and grand theory building is almost impossible to do. As we suggest in this chapter, taking into account aspects of the activity, context and experience should provide a platform for understanding the distinctive matrix of leisure referred to by Larson and Verma (1999).

The bulk of the literature on the developmental affordances of leisure has focused on the importance of organized, structured activity. Structured activities have been defined as those that (a) are organized and/or supervised by adults, (b) place limitations on adolescents' time use, and (c) focus on skill building (Mahoney et al., 2006; Osgood, Anderson, & Shaffer, 2005). Additionally, Mahoney and Stattin (2000) suggested that in order for an activity to be considered structured, the group must meet at least once a week and include same-age peers. Structured activities might take place in school and/or community settings (Bartko & Eccles, 2003; Eccles et al., 2003; Mahoney, 2000). Examples of structured activities include extracurricular activities that are school based (e.g., clubs/organizations and student council) or community based (e.g., organized activities like club sports teams).

Although leisure activities are typically termed structured or unstructured, these labels are limiting because they do not accurately capture all possible leisure activity component combinations. For example, just because an activity is supervised by adults does not necessarily mean that the activity also promotes skill building (Mahoney, Stattin, & Magnusson, 2001). Likewise, just because adults are not present during a leisure activity does not mean that adolescents are participating in activities that do not provide skill-building opportunities (Haggard & Williams, 1992). Nevertheless, these terms have been used extensively in the literature, which is reviewed next.

Research on Structured Activities

Eccles and colleagues (2003) found that the youth who participated in prosocial activities (e.g., church attendance and volunteering), team sports, performing arts, school-involvement activities (e.g., student government and pep club), and academic clubs exhibited better than expected educational outcomes (e.g., high GPA, college attendance, and college graduation). Similarly, high school students who participated in extracurricular activities reported higher grades, more positive attitudes toward school, and higher academic aspirations (Darling, 2005). Among a sample of low-income youths, those who participated in school-based programs in middle school reported higher grades in middle school and in their first year of high school (Pedersen & Seidman, 2005). Furthermore, continued participation in recreation activities through the high school years has been associated with attending college at age 20 (Mahoney, Cairnes, & Farmer, 2003).

Other findings reveal that participation among various structured activities may yield different outcomes based on the activity domain (Eccles et al., 2003; Fauth, Roth, & Brooks-Gunn, 2007). For example, Eccles and colleagues found that team sports were related to higher rates of drinking but better educational outcomes, performing arts was related to less risky behavior, and school-involvement activities was related to lower risky behavior and greater academic outcomes. Fauth and colleagues found that participation in sports was related to lower levels of anxiety/depression and higher levels of delinquency and substance use. Participation in arts and student government was negatively related to substance use, but the youth who participated in these activities exhibited increases in substance use with time.

Previous research shows that adolescents who participate in structured extracurricular activities are less likely to engage in antisocial behavior (Mahoney, 2000; Mahoney & Stattin, 2000; Sinha, Cnaan, & Gelles, 2007; Zaff, Moore, Papillo, & Williams, 2003) and more likely to have a higher level of academic achievement (Bartko & Eccles, 2003; Mahoney et al., 2003) and positive psychosocial functioning (Bartko & Eccles). Darling (2005) found that participation in extracurricular activities was related to lower levels of smoking, marijuana use, and the use of other drugs compared to the youth who did not participate. On the other hand, Mahoney and colleagues (2006) found that there was a decline in alcohol use for those spending less than 15 h in activities and an increase in alcohol use for those spending 15 h or more in activities. However, the youth who participated in 20 or more hours per week showed lower levels of alcohol use than those who did not participate at all.

Fauth et al. (2007) linked participation in nonsport activities such as arts and student government to lower rates of substance use; participation in sports was related to greater levels of substance use and delinquency. Likewise, Eccles and colleagues (2003) found that participation in sports was the only activity that was related to higher rates of substance use.

Research on Unstructured Activities

Unstructured activities have been defined as the opposite of structured activities (e.g., unsupervised, no focus on skill building). Examples of unstructured activities include "hanging out," chores, pick-up sports games, and after-school programs that do not guide youth's behavior (Mahoney et al., 2006; Mahoney & Stattin, 2000; Osgood et al., 2005; Persson, Kerr, & Stattin, 2007). When unsupervised activities are defined only by sedentary activities or by hanging out, unsupervised activity participation typically is linked to negative outcomes. For example, hanging out is positively related to alcohol initiation (Strycker, Duncan, & Pickering, 2003), and sedentary activities such as watching TV and playing video games are related to outcomes such as increases in overweight (Koezuka et al., 2006) and declines in physical activity (Motl, McAuley, Birnbaum, & Lytle, 2006) among adolescents. Likewise, Sharp, Coatsworth, Darling, Cumsille, and Ranieri (2007) collapsed passive behaviors (e.g., watching TV) with risky behavior (e.g., drinking alcohol) into a single passive/risk activity category and found that activities in this category were related to lower levels of goal-directed behavior compared to other categories.

Some researchers and theorists, however, have argued that unstructured time is important for healthy development and self-expression (e.g., Kleiber, 1999). Elkins (2003) posited a view that many contemporary children and adolescents are overscheduled, making them more likely to be stressed and less likely to engage in important childhood activities such as playing in a natural, creative way. Elkins' perspective is consistent with the literature outlining the need to promote multiple intelligences, including creative and socioemotional intelligence, among the youth.

Furthermore, when unstructured activities are defined more broadly, research findings are more positive. For example, participation in activities like backpacking and chess has value for expressing and affirming identity among college students (Haggard & Williams, 1992). One of the findings from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation's Digital Youth Project (Horst et al., 2008) was that the youth formed virtual groups to help each other with technology and taught themselves through peer-to-peer interaction. It is likewise logical to assume that learning to play the guitar, or being in a rock band, may contribute to the development of creativity, persistence, competence, social belonging, and identity. Thus, there is reason to believe that positive experiences and outcomes may result from adolescents' participation in unsupervised leisure activities, although much more research is needed in this area.

Finally, one must consider the balance in an adolescents' leisure. Adolescents need a balanced repertoire of activities in which they can engage that will give them a variety of benefits (e.g., social, physical, mental, spiritual, civic/community). An adolescent who primarily engages in massively multiplayer online gaming, for example, is less likely to reap a variety of benefits and experiences, although that is not to say that he or she is not gaining benefits from online gaming. The point is that an exclusive reliance on only one type of activity is probably not the most conducive to adolescent development. That is, however, a conjecture and an untested empirical question.

Context

Activities take place in contexts, meaning that there are elements embedded in the activity or in the environment that contribute to how adolescents experience the activity. Most, if not all, of the research on contextual factors has focused on elements of organized or structured activities that are important to producing outcomes (both positive and negative). The National Research Council and Institute of Medicine (2002) presented eight context or program features of structure activities that are necessary to produce positive developmental outcomes. These include physical and psychological safety, appropriate structure, supportive relationships, opportunities to belong, positive social norms, support for efficacy and mattering, opportunities for skill building, and integration of family, school, and community efforts.

Some of the best work with regard to aspects of the context that lead to the most positive outcomes has been conducted by Reed Larson and his colleagues and Jacquelynne Eccles and her colleagues. Their work has evolved over time from discovering a laundry list of contextual elements that are important to a more developmental perspective of why and how, and for whom, these elements are important. For the purposes of this chapter, those aspects of structured or organized activities that research has identified as most important include the following:

1. Leadership, guidance, and facilitation from competent and caring adults are critical. This means that adults should appropriately scaffold opportunities for the youth to learn, be challenged, and be supported through success and failure (e.g., Larson, 2006). In doing this, they must take into account the biological and neurological developmental levels of the youth, as well as the complexity of the activity, vis-à-vis how much experience the youth have had with the activity. For example, early adolescents or adolescents with limited experience with the task will need more guidance and supervision than older adolescents or those with previous experience with the task. Research suggests that "both too little and too much adult-imposed structure is related to poorer outcomes than moderate levels of adult-imposed structure" (Eccles & Gootman, 2002, p. 93). Research also suggests that adolescents thrive when clear rules and boundaries are mutually agreed upon.
2. Opportunity for youth voice and choice is critical. Adolescents should be given authentic opportunity to make decisions and work agentically. This point leads directly from the previous one because the appropriate amount of adult support and guidance will serve to catalyze adolescents' inherent motivation (e.g., Larson, 2006). Emanating from the positive youth developmental perspective, providing the youth with the supports and opportunities to make their own choices and decisions reflects the need and capabilities of the youth to the producers of their own development (Larson).
3. Ample opportunities should exist for the youth to belong, be recognized as being valued and important, and to engage in meaningful experiences that contribute to

community building. Experiencing efficacy and a sense of mattering is critical for growth and identity development (Eccles & Gootman, 2002, p. 106).

4. Opportunity for skill development is critical. This is best facilitated when adults provide specific feedback about one's performance (Larson, Walker, & Pearce, 2005). A major role of skill development is not only to help develop one's sense of competence but also to develop skills useful in adulthood. Thus, as adolescents mature, engaging them in real world experiences facilitates the transition to adulthood. This process has been described by Larson and Walker (2006) as one of experiencing dissonance, which activates the need to learn to adapt, overcome challenges, persist, and respond to environmental feedback (e.g., things do not always go as planned). As a result, self-efficacy, perceived competence, and intrinsic motivation are experienced. Youths learn to be active players in their own development and maximize control of their actions and emotions. This process is enhanced through opportunities for personal reflection and feedback.
5. A culture of positive social norms serves to promote appropriate behavior among all participants. Peers have the ability to act as excellent role models to each other through modeling social and emotional competence (Zaff & Moore, 2002). In these cases, peers promote positive social norms and feelings of belonging, which are important to positive youth development. For example, interacting with others may require the youth to learn how to lead and how to follow. They also learn basic social skills and the necessity of paying attention to other people's feelings and interests. In a study by Dworkin, Larson, and Hansen (2003), one of the benefits of interacting with peers in more structured activities was the ability to control anger and anxiety and stay focused on the activity at hand. In addition, Dworkin et al. found that adolescents reported that interacting with peers who would normally be outside their existing network was one of the most important benefits of participating in structured, formal, youth-based activities. Youths who participate in these types of activities tend to have broader types of friends than youths who do not (Dworkin et al.).

Experience

In understanding how leisure contributes to adolescent development, it is also important to consider how adolescents experience an activity, whether it be structured or unstructured. Personal experiences within leisure activities are important for a couple of reasons. First, positive and negative feelings within leisure activities are related to behavioral outcomes (Hunter & Csikszentmihalyi, 2003; Iso-Ahola & Crowley, 1991). Additionally, adolescents' experiences will be unique according to each individual (Coatsworth et al., 2006; Dworkin et al., 2003). That is, what is exciting and engaging, or uninteresting and boring, to one adolescent might not be to another adolescent. Thus, it is not enough to link types of activities or activity contexts to outcomes. Researchers must also understand adolescents' personal

experiences within leisure to gain a comprehensive understanding about how and why all components of leisure activity participation relate to outcomes.

Regardless of the activity, feelings of engagement and interest have been linked with positive outcomes and disengagement and disinterest with negative outcomes (e.g., Hunter & Csikszentmihalyi, 2003; Larson, 2000). Moreover, the reason or motivation behind doing the activity is likely more important than the activity itself and whether or not it is structured or unstructured.

Boredom is a common experience among adolescents. Bob Atchison from the Center for Youth Studies (Retrieved April 26, 2010, from http://roswellga.ourlittle.net/Boredom) reported that over 60% of the youth he surveyed talked about boredom as "having nothing to do, no options, or being stuck someplace they would rather not be." He found that boredom is tied to understimulation, repetition, and disconnection.

Related to the experience of boredom is the state of being amotivated (i.e., doing an activity without a purpose or reason), which is an opposite state to being motivated by either intrinsic or extrinsic goals.

A youth feeling bored during leisure is particularly troubling because leisure is "supposed" to be intrinsically motivating, self-directed, fun, and enjoyable. If an adolescent is bored during leisure, it should trigger the need to identify the sources of boredom and deal with that. For example, the youth could change aspects of participation (e.g., changing rules to make it more fun) or find something more interesting to do. Thus, boredom can be a staging area for youth's creativity to play out, particularly as adolescent's brains are wired for novelty and they seek to develop interests and passions. Unfortunately, many times youth boredom leads to risky or deviant behavior. The need for sensation seeking and the adolescent brain's inability to well control impulsivity may lead to risky decisions, particularly if a group of adolescents are hanging out together and they are experiencing boredom.

Youths who experience consistently high rates of boredom and disengagement during their leisure time or report just "hanging out" in their leisure are at greater risk for engaging in substance use and delinquency behaviors (Caldwell & Darling, 1999; Caldwell & Smith, 1995; Caldwell, Smith, & Weissinger, 1992; Csikszentmihalyi & Larson, 1984; Larson & Richards, 1991; National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse, 2003; Osgood, Wilson, O'Malley, Bachman, & Johnston, 1996; Shaw, Caldwell, & Kleiber, 1996). For example, the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University surveyed close to 2,000 12- to 17-year-olds in 2003 and found that high stress, boredom, and/or disposable income (creating the opportunity to purchase) were associated with higher risk of substance use.

Engaging in risk behaviors may be a result of an adolescent looking for excitement or just something to do (e.g., Osgood et al., 1996) or searching for meaning in life by trying to escape feelings of amotivation and anomie, which are both related to lack of meaning and self-control. From a sociological perspective, Durkheim (1951 [1897]) suggested that anomie causes a disruption in the social fabric that is related to normlessness. Another perspective comes from routine activity theory (e.g., Osgood et al.). Osgood et al. maintained that youths are differentially motivated

or tempted by situations and that youths who are involved in deviant activities do not necessarily reject conventional values but rather seek excitement, conspicuous consumption, and toughness. They further suggested that unstructured activities, unlike structured ones, typically lack social control from authority figures (Osgood et al.). Their research concluded that socializing with peers in unsupervised environments was closely related to deviant behavior, but if the unsupervised activity was associated with some type of structure (e.g., sports or dating), this relation was not present.

It is unclear whether or not a bored state in free time is actually leisure to the adolescent or not. If it is a fleeting state within what might be considered a leisure activity, and the adolescent can restructure the situation to become interested and engaged, the term leisure may still apply. If an adolescent's free time is typically characterized by chronic boredom, it is unlikely that the adolescent experiences leisure nor reaps the developmental benefits possible through leisure.

Some additional insight may be gained from findings presented by Caldwell and Smith (2006) who reported that in a sample of rural Appalachian middle-school youths, high levels of interest and low levels of leisure boredom positively predicted property damage. On the other hand, Caldwell and Smith found that lower levels of property damage were associated with youths who reported high levels of leisure-related initiative, goal-oriented motivation, and low amotivation; were aware of leisure opportunities in their communities; and whose parents were knowledgeable about what they did in their leisure time and who they were with.

Upon reflection, it is possible that the youth who engaged in property damage were experiencing leisure or a new form of adventure recreation (Galloway, 2006). If it is true that deviance or other risk behaviors are forms of leisure for some adolescents, it is not surprising that high interest and low boredom are associated with enacting property damage. This discussion, however, begs the question as to just what deviance, crime, and delinquency are in relation to leisure. Interested readers should consult the special issue on "Deviant Leisure" of *Leisure/Loisir* (Vol. 30, 2006) for further discussion on this matter.

These findings also implicate Stebbins' (2006) typology of serious, nonserious, and casual leisure. From this perspective, property damage could be considered casual leisure for some youths. Casual leisure is characterized by being hedonistic and pleasurable in the short run. Caldwell and Smith's (2006) findings suggest that those youths who experience amotivation in leisure are highly susceptible to peer influence and whose parents are not perceived to be knowledgeable are likely to be situationally motivated and engage in casual leisure. This finding seems consistent with differential association theory and routine activity theory, although in this case we are not sure if delinquency is due to positive norms to engage in property damage or due to being amotivated and disengaged with life. If the latter, the youth may have been looking for some excitement or just "something to do" (e.g., Osgood et al., 1996) or searching for meaning in life by trying to escape feelings of amotivation and anomie, which are both related to lack of meaning and self-control.

On the other hand, youths who reported lower levels of property damage may have been future oriented and purposeful in their actions so as to actively construct

their futures, at least in terms of their leisure pursuits. These youths reported that they were motivated in their leisure pursuits by being goal oriented and possessed initiative. They also knew of leisure activities to do in their communities and reported positive relations with their parents regarding leisure activities. It is possible that these youths were more likely to engage in more "serious" leisure pursuits, which Stebbins (2006) would characterize as providing deep meaning and shared social bonds with others who enjoy the same pursuit. This bond is forged over time and requires initiative and purposeful action. Thus, serious leisure as a context of shared personal meaning and commitment may be an important context for positive forms of social control to develop.

Related to this discussion, using data from the Swedish Youth Recreation Center (YRC), Mahoney and Stattin (2000) concluded that structured activity is linked to low antisocial behavior, while involvement at the unstructured YRC was associated with high antisocial behavior. They reasoned that:

> … the issue is not whether an individual is engaged in an activity—the issue appears to be *what* the individual is engaged in, and with *whom*. In terms of antisocial behavior, it may be better to be uninvolved than to participate in unstructured activity, particularly if it features a high number of deviant youth. (p. 123)

Much more research is needed to better understand the interaction between leisure activity, contextual elements, and experience within an activity. We know little about how these interact with each other to produce a positive leisure experience or lead to risky leisure behavior among adolescents. There is also little research done on the temporal experience within a single leisure experience or across time within one leisure activity (e.g., after-school club or sports team).

Leisure as Prevention

Despite some inconsistencies in the literature, particularly around outcomes associated with sports participation, and conceptual and methodological issues related to studying adolescent leisure, researchers have begun to uncover aspects of leisure that are linked with positive and negative outcomes. The leisure elements of activities, contexts, and experiences combine to create conditions that either serve to protect the youth from negative or risky behaviors or promote positive and healthy development. This conclusion leads to a discussion of how leisure may serve as an important preventive period in an adolescent's life.

Prevention science is a relatively young science; the journal *Prevention Science* celebrated its 10-year anniversary in 2010. Prevention focuses on both the promotion of health and well-being and the prevention of risk and thus naturally provides a framework in which to address the paradox of leisure. The concept of risk prevention and harm reduction has emerged over the past two decades as the preferred perspective for dealing with problem behaviors. *Prevention* is geared toward preventing or lessening the possibility that something negative will happen in an adolescent's life. Preventing something from occurring is preferable to fixing it after

it happens (e.g., addictions and suicide attempts). Prevention also can focus on mitigating further complications, if something has already happened (e.g., depression leading to attempted suicide). Equally important, however, is that prevention is also concerned with *promoting* things that will counteract risk factors and enhance an adolescent's development and living situation. Thus, the positive benefits of participating in leisure contribute to preventing risk behaviors (e.g., substance use) and promoting health and academic success.

A prevention perspective to adolescent leisure suggests that adolescents can be taught the importance of making healthy choices to reap the benefits of leisure and avoid potentially risky behaviors. Typically, prevention focuses on helping individuals, systems (e.g., school systems or community-based systems), and policies change in a direction that promotes health and well-being and prevents the initiative of or mitigates existing health risk behaviors (e.g., cigarette smoking or substance misuse). Thus, many prevention programs are based on some type of intervention.

One promising leisure-related intervention for adolescents is leisure education. Leisure education is the process of educating individuals about healthy use of leisure time and serves to promote self-awareness of the need to gain healthy benefits from leisure, understand the value of leisure and in particular intrinsically motivated leisure, develop interests, find leisure resources, understand how to plan for and make good decisions about leisure, and overcome constraints that may impede participation and positive experience.

Leisure Education as Prevention: TimeWise and HealthWise Examples

Two prevention-focused leisure education programs, TimeWise: Taking Charge of Leisure Time (Caldwell, 2004) and HealthWise South Africa: Life Skills for Young Adults (Caldwell, Smith, & Wegner, 2004), have shown promising evidence that universal prevention programs for middle- or high-school-aged youth can be effective in promoting health and preventing risk. These will be briefly described as examples of how leisure education can be a tool for prevention. The focus of both of these interventions was to help the youth learn how to take responsibility for increasing the benefits they get from leisure and avoiding risky behavior in leisure. When this goal is accomplished, it is likely that youth's leisure time will be maximized in terms of the types of activities in which they participate, the contexts in which they spend their time, and the experiences they have.

TimeWise: Taking Charge of Leisure Time Evaluation

The TimeWise curriculum was originally developed as a substance abuse prevention program to be implemented in middle-school classrooms and was funded by the National Institutes of Health/National Institute on Drug Abuse. The primary

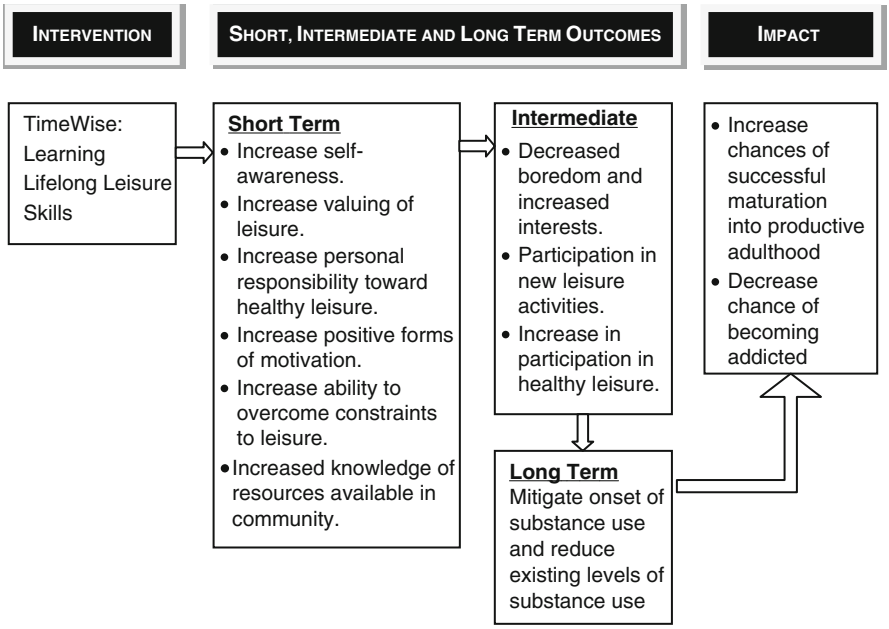

Fig. 3.2 TimeWise logic model

objective of this efficacy trial was to compare TW to a no-intervention control group in an attempt to decrease rates of substance use initiation or use. Our hypothesis was that leisure-related outcomes would mediate decreases in substance use/initiation. See Fig. 3.2 for a graphical depiction of the basic logic model associated with TimeWise.

Nine schools were recruited to participate: four were randomly assigned to the experimental group and five to the control group. All schools were in rural school districts in Pennsylvania (USA) and were chosen to represent relatively poor, small (i.e., less than 1,000 students) school districts. In each school, approximately 1/3 of the students received free or reduced price lunches. The TimeWise core curriculum was implemented in the four experimental-condition school districts in the spring of 2001 to 634 7th-grade students (315 or 49.7% were female and 95% were European American). In the springs of 2002 and 2003, three-period booster sessions were administered (students were then in the 8th and 9th grades). Students were from rural backgrounds; 30.4% of the students lived in a rural area, 25% lived in a neighborhood but not "in a town," 25.2% lived in a town, and 6.9% lived on a farm. They were also from low socioeconomic status areas; 56.7% bought their own lunch, 20.8% received free lunch, and 11.8% were eligible for reduced lunch.

A number of leisure-related theories were utilized in creating the TimeWise curriculum. Ecological systems theory (e.g., Bronfenbrenner, 1994) was the overarching

basis for the development of TimeWise. This theory suggests that in order to understand or influence an individual, several factors must be considered, including personal characteristics (e.g., personality, gender, age), social factors (e.g., parents, peers, teachers, and other important adults), community factors (e.g., quality of schools, presence of parks and trails), and larger cultural factors (e.g., community values and ethnic and/or racial issues). Within the context of ecological systems theory, leisure-related theories were used to help the curriculum developers understand personal, social, and community wide factors that were important to incorporate into the TimeWise curriculum. These theories included self-determination theory (e.g., Ryan & Deci, 2000), development as action in context (Silbereisen & Todt, 1994), constraints theory (Jackson, 2005), optimal arousal theory (Mannell & Kleiber, 1997), boredom and interest development (Hunter & Csikszentmihalyi, 2003), and flow theory (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990).

Based on these theories, TimeWise is comprised of six core and six additional lessons. In the manual, each lesson is broken into two core activities that take about 30–40 min to implement in a structured classroom setting. The six core lessons focus on teaching students to:

1. Determine personally satisfying and meaningful leisure activities and interests
2. Understand the benefits of participating in healthy leisure
3. Understand how one's motivation affects one's experience and participation in healthy behaviors
4. Alleviate boredom and increase optimal experience in leisure time
5. Learn how to take responsible action to participate in desired activities
6. Identify and overcome constraints that get in the way of participation in desired activities

The additional lessons include:

1. Educating others about leisure
2. Making decisions and taking risks
3. Achieving flow
4. Managing stress and becoming mindful
5. Friendships and leisure
6. Leisure and change

Results from the TimeWise intervention are promising (e.g., Caldwell, Baldwin, Walls, & Smith, 2004). Researchers found that those who received TimeWise had greater interest in activities and lower rates of boredom. They also reported lower levels of amotivation (i.e., doing things because there is nothing else to do and lack of self-regulation). TimeWise youths also reported greater levels of initiative (e.g., taking charge and pursuing an interest) and the ability to restructure activities. Youths who had the TimeWise program also were more aware of leisure opportunities in the community and reported being better able to make plans and decisions in their leisure time. Regarding substance use, the results were promising; however, given the very low rate of substance use among this rural sample, it was difficult to

detect differences between experimental and comparison groups. TimeWise youths did, however, report lower rates of use of marijuana and inhalants, particularly for males. This effect was more pronounced at the end of 9th grade.

HealthWise South Africa: Life Skills for Young Adults

HealthWise (Caldwell et al., 2004) was developed in response to a request from colleagues in South Africa who were interested in youth risk reduction and health promotion through leisure. HealthWise emanated from TimeWise but included a stronger focus on sexual risk reduction, substance use, and the comorbidity of the two. It also included a stronger emphasis on general life skills such as anger and anxiety management. HealthWise was also funded by the National Institutes of Health/National Institute on Drug Abuse. HealthWise was pilot tested in 2001–2002, modified, and then evaluated over 5 years, beginning in 2003.

Nine high schools in Mitchell's Plain, South Africa, were recruited to participate in the study; students in four schools received HealthWise, and five schools served as comparisons. Overall, 6,050 youths participated. We collected data every 6 months on three sequential 8th-grade cohorts through grade 10. Mitchell's Plain was established as a township for people of mixed-race backgrounds (i.e., colored) during the Apartheid era. People in this region are generally poor, unemployment is high, and most schools are in need of repair. Based on students' self-reports, 86% of the study population were mixed race, 9% Black, and the remainder either Indian or White.

The HealthWise curriculum included 17 lessons, with each requiring 2–3-lesson periods (see Table 3.1 for a listing of the lessons). Figure 3.3 depicts the risk and protective factors targeted along with the corresponding lessons. HealthWise was delivered in grades 8 and 9 to three successive eighth-grade cohorts beginning in 2003. The overall goals of the HealthWise curriculum were to (1) reduce the sexual risk, (2) reduce drug abuse, and (3) increase positive use and experience of free and leisure time. The program was designed to provide a sequential set of activities to teach the youth:

- How to use their free time in ways that will be beneficial to themselves, their families and friends, and their community
- Specific inter- and intrapersonal skills to make good decisions, control their emotions such as anger and anxiety, resolve conflicts, and overcome boredom in free time
- Specific facts about the causes and effects of drug use and sexual risk-taking behaviors
- Specific ways to avoid peer pressure and to take responsible action in their free time
- How to interact with and access community resources

Results from this study, as with the TimeWise study, indicated that both programs are promising prevention programs. Of particular interest was to understand the relation between leisure-related boredom and leisure motivation and substance use and sexual

Table 3.1 HealthWise lessons

Grade 8
Lesson 1: Self-awareness
Lesson 2: Managing anxiety
Lesson 3: Managing anger
Lesson 4: Exploring free time
Lesson 5: Free time in my community
Lesson 6: Beating boredom and developing interests
Lesson 7: Overcoming roadblocks
Lesson 8: Decision making
Lesson 9: Managing risk
Lesson 10: Avoiding risky sexual behavior
Lesson 11: Myths and realities of drug use
Lesson 12: Avoiding and reducing risk
Grade 9
Lesson 1: Review
Lesson 2: Leisure motivation
Lesson 3: Community connections
Lesson 4: Planning and managing leisure
Lesson 5: Relationships and sexual behavior
Lesson 6: Conflict resolution

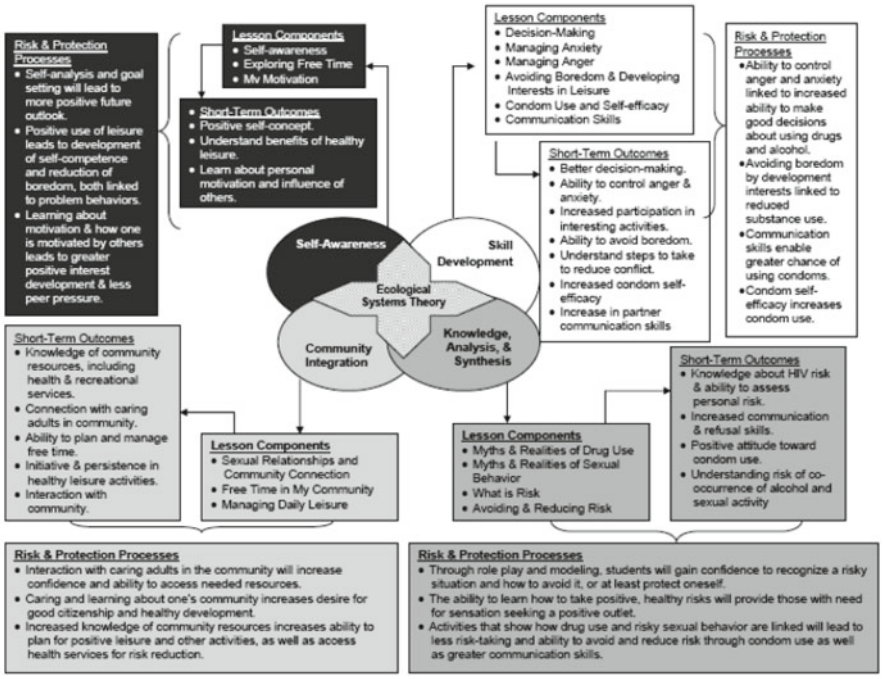

Fig. 3.3 HealthWise program model: selected components and outcomes

risk behaviors. In one set of analyses using seven waves of HW data, the strongest leisure-related predictors of using substances both between and within subjects were greater leisure boredom, too much perceived parental control, and poor, unhealthy leisure choices (Sharp, Caldwell, Graham, & Ridenour, 2006). Furthermore, youths who *became more bored* in their leisure between the 8th grade and 10th grade had the highest odds of smoking and use of alcohol and marijuana. A one-unit increase in leisure boredom from the beginning of 8th grade to the beginning of 10th grade was associated with increased odds of using alcohol, cigarettes, and marijuana (14, 23, and 36%, respectively; Sharp et al., 2011). Researchers also found that those with high levels of leisure-related intrinsic motivation had the lowest odds of smoking and use of alcohol, marijuana, and inhalants (Caldwell, Patrick, Smith, Palen, & Wegner, 2010).

Emanating from the LACE model, researchers were also interested in youth's experiences within activities. Therefore, they asked the youth about specific activities in which they participated as well as levels of motivation and boredom for each specific activity. They found that compared to youths who participated in one or more leisure activities but were motivated and interested, youths who participated in several leisure activities but were amotivated and bored in all of them had the highest likelihood of alcohol and tobacco use (Tibbits, Caldwell, Smith, & Wegner, 2009). Furthermore, females who only spent leisure time in social activities and were amotivated and bored while doing so had a much higher likelihood of alcohol and tobacco use than females who only spent time in social activities but were interested and motivated. Additional analysis suggested that spending time with friends positively predicted lifetime alcohol use, while participating in hobbies and music and singing activities negatively predicted lifetime alcohol use. Spending time with friends (for everyone) and reporting high levels of boredom in leisure (for girls) also predicted lifetime marijuana use (Tibbits, Caldwell, Smith, & Flisher, 2009).

Finally, the researchers found that implementation quality mattered. That is, students had increases in leisure-related intrinsic motivation and stable identified motivation as well as decreases in introjected motivation and amotivation in the school where teachers had high levels of implementation quality (Caldwell & Patrick, et al., 2010; Caldwell & Younker, et al., 2008).

In summary, both interventions were geared toward increasing positive and decreasing negative outcomes associated with leisure. These interventions were derived from leisure, developmental, and prevention theories. Results show some indication that leisure education, coupled with a preventive orientation, may be effective in increasing positive leisure outcomes and decreasing negative ones.

Concluding Remarks

This chapter has provided evidence that leisure is a critically important aspect of adolescents' lives. Leisure contributes very positively to adolescent health, well-being, and positive development. In order to understand leisure's contributions to positive adolescent outcomes, it is important to unpack the elements of leisure,

which include activities, context, and experiences. Most of the literature on adolescent leisure has focused on outcomes associated with structured or organized leisure activities; much more is needed to more fully understand the outcomes associated with unstructured or unsupervised leisure. Included in this chapter has also been a discussion on negative outcomes associated with leisure. Especially among adolescents, risky behaviors may occur in leisure, such as substance use and vandalism.

Given both the opportunity for risk and healthy development, one possible approach to adolescent leisure is through leisure education as a means to promote positive outcomes and prevent negative ones.

Despite this rather utilitarian perspective, however, the main thing to recognize is that leisure provides a rich and unique context for adolescents to develop into healthy adults by engaging in activities and behaviors that contribute to personal enjoyment, meaning, and identity and autonomy development. Skills learned and utilized in leisure can help then transition into healthy adults. At times, however, interventions are needed to assist adolescents in gaining the most from their leisure.

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Chapter 4
Leisure Experience and Positive Identity Development in Adolescents

Teresa Freire

Introduction

The search for a balance between time for compulsory tasks and time for freedom and relaxation is one of the most important issues related to the role of leisure in achieving well-being. Leisure's complexity and its relationship with so many life aspects make it an important issue in the study of optimal human functioning.

A review of the literature regarding leisure and adolescence shows a wide spectrum of conclusions about how leisure contributes to adolescent development in general (cf. Verma & Larson, 2003) and on identity development in particular (cf. Shaw, Kleiber, & Caldwell, 1995). This chapter aims to analyze these contributions and integrate them into the scope of positive adolescent development.

We recognize that leisure is a multidimensional concept that includes individual, social, and environmental aspects; this understanding underlines our perspective of leisure as subjective experience determined by the interaction between the individual and his/her environment. This interaction leads to the emergence of an experiential perception of leisure that is present in and occurs throughout daily life. The experience of leisure, then, results from a historically, culturally, and societally defined time, determined by both the opportunities available within the daily environment and by individual characteristics (Freire, 1999, 2006b). Regarding developmental research, this chapter aims to develop an understanding of leisure's contribution to positive identity development in adolescence.

To address these objectives, this chapter is structured according to different topics. First, we discuss the relevance of the relationship between leisure, adolescence, and positive development. Then, we discuss the concept of leisure, proposing a specific definition that considers leisure a subjective experience that integrates a variety of

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components, supported by a psychosocial-environmental approach to leisure and development (Freire, 1999). The specific relationship between leisure and identity is then explored by discussing different concepts of identity, such as personal, social, and place identities. After this, the concept of positive identity development in adolescents is discussed as an optimal match between leisure components and types of identity. This conceptual match forms the core of our approach. Finally, some conclusions and considerations for future research are considered, highlighting new directions for leisure studies.

Leisure, Adolescence, and Positive Development

Although leisure is not examined exclusively within the context of adolescence, its positive impact on adolescents is presented in the literature as it relates to the multiple life variables that influence developmental trajectories. Accordingly, the conceptual triangulation between *adolescence, development, and leisure* provides a basic framework for the study of identity in adolescence. *Adolescence* is viewed as a period for "resources to be developed" (Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2003), a period during which plasticity, adaptive developmental regulations, and thriving converge, as expressed in the concept of "positive youth development" (Lerner, von Eye, Lerner, Lewin-Bizan, & Bowers, 2010). *Development* is based on the perspective of improved person-context interactions that structure healthy life trajectories, in addition to problems, disorders, or dysfunctions that limit the course of developmental trajectories (Larson, 2000; Steen, Kachorek, & Peterson, 2003). *Leisure* can be understood as opportunities for adolescents to be active producers of their own development (Dwokin, Larson, & Hansen, 2003; Freire, 1999; Silbereisen, Noack, & Eyferth, 1986), highlighting youth activities as contexts for development (King et al., 2005; Larson, 2000).

Adolescents spend significant time in leisure activities in comparison with other groups in the general population, i.e., in comparison with adults, who have to devote a significant amount of time to work and other tasks related to several social roles (Super, 1984). Previous studies of Portuguese adolescents (male and female high school students, mean age of 17.1 years), using the experience sampling method (ESM) during a week of their daily life, have shown that they spent approximately 36.9% of their week engaged in free-time/leisure activities (including 16.5% in socialization), 29.2% in productive tasks (17.9% studying at school and 10.3% studying at home), and 15.7% in maintenance activities (Freire, Fonte, & Lima, 2007). A recent ongoing study of high school students (boys and girls, mean age of 16.76 years old) using the same methodology found that, over the course of a week, they spent 31.1% of their time engaged in productive activities, 30.3% in maintenance activities, and 38.4% in leisure activities. In a different study (Freire, Lima, & Fonte, 2009), high school students (boys and girls, mean age of 16.7 years), questioned about their life interests via self-report measures, have reported that leisure (structured and active activities), social relationships with peers, and mass media

(watching TV and listening to music) were their preferred activities (respectively, 31.39, 22.28, and 19.75% of the 395 answers provided). It is interesting to note that the activities adolescents referred to are all about free-time/leisure activities, particularly if we do not differentiate between active and passive leisure. When questioned about the activities they would like to do if they were free to choose whatever they wanted, leisure activities were indicated most frequently (27.41%), followed by work (14.72%), social relationships/peers (13.71%), and personal thoughts/emotions (13.2%) in a total of 197 answers. As in other studies of adolescents from other countries and cultures, these results show that leisure activities are relevant to the daily lives of adolescents for two reasons: the considerable amount of time spent on leisure activities and the positive meanings adolescents associate with these activities. This justifies leisure's status as a highly preferred life activity among adolescents (Csikszentmihalyi & Larson, 1984).

Therefore, the involvement and consequent engagement in leisure activities is a major aspect of promoting positive development in adolescence. One major issue centers on the impact of effective participation and engagement in leisure activities, showing how different activities can have different impacts on development and shedding light on leisure's beneficial role in development (Larson, 2000). Larson considered the component of initiative "a core quality of positive youth development" and "a core requirement for other components of positive development, such as creativity, leadership, altruism, and civic engagement" (p. 170). According to his approach, leisure can provide a set of structured activities that can improve initiative and positive development, which facilitates the movement into positive adulthood. Along the same conceptual line, Lerner's perspective has been of great importance in showing how adolescence is per se associated with positive development, using the concept of *plasticity* (Lerner et al., 2010). This concept represents a fundamental strength of the adolescent period and shows how systematic changes may result in more positive functioning. Action and involvement are some of the most important requirements for achieving this positive development, and leisure activities permit and create opportunities for this to occur (Rich, 2003), mainly if they integrate intrinsic motivation, concerted engagement in the environment, and persistence over time that directs these elements toward a goal (Larson, 2000; Watts & Caldwell, 2008).

This perspective underscores the distinction between free time and leisure, types of leisure activities, and the discussion surrounding the positivity and negativity of leisure outcomes (Bartko & Eccles, 2003; Caldwell, 2005b; Freire, 2006a; Freire & Stebbins, 2011; Vicary, Smith, Caldwell, & Swisher, 1998). While we recognize the potential disagreement about these issues, we advocate for a leisure that fosters development and allows adolescents to learn from their experiences and acquire new skills and competencies while developing a positive relationship with themselves, the others, and the environment, becoming "interested adolescents" (Hunter & Csikszentmihalyi, 2003). This is related to the concept of optimal leisure defined as a learned experience, being the context the main source of education by giving structured, adequate, and healthy opportunities of choice about the activities to involve in (Freire, 2007; Freire & Stebbins, 2011). Adolescents can have

different experiences during free time, but only some of them are related to leisure, and only some of these constitute optimal leisure experiences. Optimal leisure creates conditions that allow adolescents to realize their full capacities and strengths, is positive in its essence, and thus promotes positive development and well-being (Trainor, Delfabbro, Anderson, & Winefield, 2010). One main issue of leisure experience is that its positiveness is independent of external social standards. Only from an experiential or phenomenological point of view is possible to understand this apparent paradox (Csikszentmihalyi & Csikszentmihalyi, 1988). Studies on the quality of subjective experience and its fluctuation through daily life show the importance of analyzing dimensions of experience, related activities, and contexts' features separately for a deep understanding of adolescents' experiences and associated meanings (Freire et al., 2007; Massimini & Delle Fave, 2000; Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2005). Leisure researchers must be aware of this in order to understand why leisure (and not free time) experience is always associated to positive feelings and outcomes from the perspective of participants.

Our approach demands a complex definition of leisure that integrates its optimal impact on positive development.

Leisure Experience and Its Components

The diverse range of definitions of leisure in the literature shows that there are no clear, agreed-upon core characteristics for a unique definition that could be understood by all researchers, regardless of their research field.

Different authors have tried to define what makes leisure a different experience from other experiences of daily life. From Neulinger (1974), who highlighted perceived freedom as the most important dimension associated with leisure, to the concept of flow and optimal experience (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975; Csikszentmihalyi & Csikszentmihalyi, 1988), intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1991) has been one of the most powerful tools for comprehending leisure experience from a psychological perspective (Mannell, Zuzanek, & Larson, 1988). Despite different approaches, definitions tend to highlight the relationship between the individual and his/her daily life contexts, making the person-environment interaction approach (Bronfenbrenner, 1986) relevant to the study of leisure experiences and their impact in pathways through adolescence (Crockett & Crouter, 1995). For instance, Caldwell (2005a) proposed an integrative approach, considering that leisure must be analyzed as an experience, an activity, or as a context. Although recognizing this broad arena for leisure studies, in this chapter, we will focus in leisure as experience, trying to understand its characteristics and different components.

Assuming a psychosocial-environmental perspective about development (Freire, 1999), we consider leisure as subjective experience. In the last decades, and since the emergence of the social cognition paradigm, increased attention has been paid to the study of subjective experience, aimed to analyze internal phenomenological states (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997) and their consequences for social thinking and

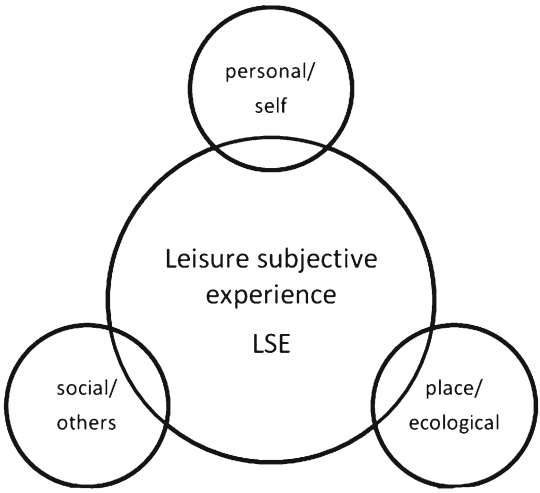

Fig. 4.1 Leisure subjective experience (*LSE*) and its components: personal leisure (personal/self), social leisure (social/others), and place or ecological leisure (place/ecological)

behavior (Bless & Forgas, 2000). Accordingly, our concept of leisure subjective experience (LSE) integrates three different but interrelated components that comprise different levels of analysis about leisure experience: the personal leisure (intrapersonal level), the social leisure (interpersonal and intergroup levels), and the place or ecological leisure (environmental level). Altogether, these different levels create a psychosocial-ecological definition of leisure experience, as expressed in Fig. 4.1. These different levels tend to be discussed separately in leisure literature, but our objective is to bring them together for a complete definition of leisure, to better understand its impact on adolescents' development.

Particularly in adolescence, the LSE emerges from action in context, as stated by Silbereisen, Eyferth, and Rudinger (1986), when subjects are involved in and performing leisure activities. This experience is then interiorized and represented in their sociocognitive map (Freire, 2011). In this process, leisure activities are important opportunities for adolescents to be engaged and learn about themselves, others, and contexts.

Several studies have shown how certain types of activities have different impacts on adolescents' experiences or development (Dwokin et al., 2003; Shernoff & Vandell, 2007), depending on whether the activities are structured or nonstructured (Eccles, Barber, Stone, & Hunt, 2003; Larson, 2000) and social or more solitary (Trainor et al., 2010), and also on their breadth or intensity of youth activity involvement (Rose-Krasnor, Busseri, Willoughby, & Chalmers, 2006). For some leisure researchers, leisure refers to specific kinds of activities (with the definition of leisure based on characteristics that differentiate it from other activities); however, we are interested in the experience that emerges from involvement and engagement in certain kind of activities. Therefore, activity is an important intermediate between the individual and the lived external context and can provide further opportunities to act (Freire & Stebbins, 2011; Stebbins, 2009). The causes or consequences of acting on leisure subjective experience (LSE) can be personal, social, or related to places,

and together they shape and represent the lived experience of leisure (from a socio-cognitive point of view).

Personal Leisure

Personal leisure refers to the intrapersonal level of LSE and comprises the individual or the self, with his/her subjective and idiosyncratic experiences, integrating personal skills, aptitudes, likes, and dislikes about leisure time or activities. It is strictly related to personal or individual characteristics and internal resources from a psychological point of view.

As shown in empirical literature, several leisure studies emphasize the impact of leisure activities and/or contexts on the improvement of internal resources that might affect positive development of adolescents. Different outcomes have been highlighted, showing how leisure participation can be associated with the improvement of different competencies, such as academic and cognitive performance, psychological well-being, the development of autonomy and decision-making skills, initiative development, emotional competency, or the emergence of optimal experiences while leisuring (Bartko & Eccles, 2003; Ben-Zur, 2003; Delle Fave & Bassi, 2000, 2003; Dwokin et al., 2003), among others.

A current study of Portuguese high school students aimed to evaluate and compare different types of activities of daily life (productive, leisure, and maintenance activities) in terms of the quality of subjective experience showed strong differences between the three types of activities when considering participants' affective dimension (negative and positive affect variables). Data were based on the analysis of 4,631 moments of 165 adolescents' daily life, collected with ESM procedures and using standardized Z scores. In terms of negative affect, the results showed that leisure activities had a negative mean versus a positive mean for productive and maintenance activities (F (2, 4,630) = 16,150, $p < .001$). In contrast, results showed an opposite pattern for positive affect, with leisure activities showing the highest mean (positive) against negative means for the other two types of activities (F (2, 4,633) = 16,030, $p < .001$). These results illustrate the association between leisure and high positive affects and low negative affects, particularly when compared with other activities of their daily life.

Recently, some studies have examined the relationship between leisure and physiological functioning as an important aspect of individual experience. For instance, it is possible that leisure promotes physiological recovery and optimal functioning by increasing positive affect and decreasing negative affect. In fact, engaging in a wide variety of leisure activities is linked to increases in positive affect, life satisfaction, and life engagement levels, as well as decreases in negative affect and depression (Pressman et al., 2009). Both positive and negative affects are linked to cardiovascular, neuroendocrine, and immune functioning outcomes (Bunting, Tolson, Kuhn, Suarez, & Williams, 2000; Fredrickson & Levenson, 1998; Iso-Ahola, 1997). These results suggest that leisure activities have both psychological and physiological benefits.

Thus, a set of results and conclusions highlight the positive impact of leisure in this personal dimension of adolescents' subjective experience. The main outcome is the enhancement of internal resources to help adolescents develop into stronger people whose lives follow more positive and healthy trajectories.

Social Leisure

Social leisure is specifically related to social interaction, that is, interpersonal or intergroup relationships during leisure, showing another component of LSE. Several leisure activities are undertaken in the company of others, for others, or because of others to achieve social objectives. Some studies show how leisure activities offer opportunities to experience new social interactions with new or familiar persons, putting in practice a wide variety of social competences: developing a sense of community, being part of a social group that is acknowledged and esteemed, having friends and adults who constitute supportive social networks, gaining a sense of belonging, and providing opportunities for social relationships and new identities in adolescence (Dwokin et al., 2003; Eccles et al., 2003; Kleiber, 1999). Despite the development of social skills, it is the acquisition of a social capital through leisure that is underlined in this social leisure component.

Such questions demand an understanding of people and the contexts within which social leisure relationships take place. In the same study reported above of Portuguese adolescents (high school students), the relationship between social interactions, in terms of the people the adolescents were with while doing an activity (five categories were considered: family, friends, classmates and teachers, others, and alone) and the type of activities (productive, leisure, or maintenance activities), was analyzed. Results showed a strong association between the type of activities and the companions (χ^2 (8, N = 411) = 1,137, $p < 0.000$), showing that the type of activity they engage in is not independent of the type of company they have.

This is a relevant aspect of subjective leisure experience (SLE): it highlights that some leisure activities (or contexts) create different opportunities for specific social connections and related personal experiences, making the two components of leisure experience (personal and social) conceptually related. The relationship between activities, social relations, and individual experience, through leisure, also demands an analysis of where this integration takes place, which is analyzed next.

Place or Ecological Leisure

Leisure subjective experience (LSE) also encompasses the places where leisure activities and related experiences occur, highlighting the concept of environment and specifically that of place or location. Most of the research outcomes focus on the consequences of participating in activities, but few look beyond what the activity offers in terms of its characteristics and the connection between them and personal

features or social interactions. As Jack (2010) states, it seems that social relationships are believed to develop in a vacuum, rather than in specific places capable of influencing a person's identity. Activities take place within specific surroundings, and they are strictly shaped by external scenarios. This means that places are often a criterion for choosing an activity, for achieving personal goals, or for embracing certain opportunities and experiences associated with specific places (Abbot-Chapman & Robertson, 2001; Hay, 1998; Korpela, 1992).

Regarding the relationship between leisure activities and places where they took place, in the same study of Portuguese adolescents, the relationship between the location where adolescents conducted an activity (four categories were considered: school, home, others' houses, public places) and the type of activities (productive, leisure, and maintenance activities) was analyzed. The results showed a strong association between the type of activities and associated places (χ^2 (6, N = 313) = 1,257, $p < 0.001$), showing that the type of activity was not independent of the type of place where the activity took place. Leisure places are associated with specific activities, and different activities require different surroundings and resources. Places can thus create different opportunities for specific experiences in adolescents' lives.

During leisure time, and while participating in leisure activities, people act and react within different places, realizing that specific places contribute to specific leisure experiences (individual or social). In our perspective, the physical or place level integrates with these intrapersonal, interpersonal, and intergroup levels, contributing to a sense of fulfillment and engagement with the social world. Twigger-Ross and Uzzell (1996) highlight the importance of identifying with a place, and according to Jack (2010), the places that are part of an individual's life (the places where they grew up, their house, schools, places where they played with friends, and many others) are crucial to individuals' identity development because they are places that elicit feelings of security and a sense of belonging.

It is the integration of these three different levels (personal, social, and ecological) that produces the subjective experience of leisure as one of the most relevant and positive experiences in adolescents' daily life. When leisure experience allows interaction of these three components, adolescents become more involved and engaged in leisure activities and consequently learn more about the social world and about themselves as active and interactive persons, which foster self-esteem and self-expression that contribute to identity construction and a positive sense of self.

Because leisure integrates personal, social, and place dimensions, it is important now to understand how leisure is related to identity formation processes.

Leisure and Identity Formation

Several studies have emphasized how participation in leisure activities specifically contributes to identity formation (Haggard & Williams, 1992; Kivel, 2000; Shaw et al., 1995).

In fact, development in adolescence is strictly associated with identity building, which is considered the most complex and challenging task that individuals face during this life period (Havighurst, 1972). Identifying leisure experience's contributions to this developmental process is both relevant and complex, particularly if the aim is to understand the interrelation between the adolescent and his/her social world to create opportunities for positive development. It is within the dialectic of individual self-expression and social accommodation that the role and significance of leisure in adolescent development is considered (Kleiber & Richards, 1985). As Kivel and Kleiber (2000) indicate, within the field of leisure studies, leisure is generally assumed to be a positive context for adolescent development because of the benefits that arise from engagement in and commitment to activities and because the selection of leisure activities may be an expression of the congruence between one's personality and leisure choices, which in turn has developmental benefits. Therefore, identity has been recognized as a main outcome of involvement in leisure activities.

The majority of the literature on this topic highlights the growing interest in the effects of leisure activities on identity formation and consequently on positive youth development, although few studies empirically support these relationships. Despite this, authors suggest that more knowledge about the role of leisure in adolescence can contribute to advances in the theoretical understanding of identity formation (Shaw et al., 1995). Existing studies tend to analyze identity as a unique and holistic concept; however, a deep analysis of identity shows more than a single, simple concept. If we cross different domains within psychology, the concept of identity becomes complex and relevant when examined parallel with developmental assets during adolescence.

According to Shaw et al. (1995), in the process of identity formation, adolescents separate themselves from others, particularly their family of origin, and develop a sense of agency and autonomy (individualization process). At the same time, they need to develop relationships with other people and identify with a particular group (social relatedness process). Consequently, both personal and social identities are strongly referenced in research that analyzes identity formation (Kivel & Kleiber, 2000). However, few studies and little empirical evidence exist about the role of physical structures, specifically in terms of locations for leisure opportunities, and their role in sociocognitive processes. Sociocognitive processes are of great relevance in adolescence because the acquisition of hypothetico-deductive or formal-operational reasoning facilitates the growth of metacognitive strategies for self-regulating psychological states and actions over time (Brandtstadter, 1998; Larson, 2000) and where locations or places have a main role.

A review of the literature related to the concept of identity shows three types of identity concepts: personal identity, social identity, and place identity. Within different psychological fields, these different identity domains are analyzed separately, but in this chapter, we tried to integrate them into a new approach to identify and show that once they are articulated, they can offer new insights into the study of positive adolescent development and identity formation through leisure.

Personal Identity and Leisure

Developmental psychology approaches have highlighted the concept of identity as a matter of personal definition and self-construction. Identity was thought to focus mainly on personality traits or structural aspects of the self and their continuity or stability across the life span.

Early studies of identity formation are associated with academics, such as Erikson (1950, 1968), Marcia (1980), and Waterman (1984). Although they emphasized different aspects, their perspectives shared an emphasis on the individual as a source of idiosyncratic characteristics, or a sense of self, organized through normative developmental patterns that were consistent throughout the life span and integrated different behaviors across multiple domains of life. However, these theories considered development from an individualistic perspective, focusing on the individual dynamic of self-construction and devoting less attention to surrounding contexts and how they shape those processes, even if on a personal level.

The contribution of leisure activities to identity formation depends on different factors, including the activity's type, nature, and gendered nature (Fredericks & Eccles, 2005; Morrissey & Werner-Wilson, 2005; Youniss, McLellan, & Yates, 1997). Nevertheless, recent studies emphasize the importance of leisure activities and active participation in providing a unique context for adolescents to explore their interests, talents, and skills and for allowing identity work to occur by providing opportunities to explore different identities (Sharp, Coatsworth, Darling, Cumsille, & Ranieri, 2007; Zarrett & Lerner, 2008).

Shaw et al. (1995) emphasize that, independently of any particular conceptualization about identity development theory, adolescents in this formation process initially experience confusion and low identity development. Only after experiencing individuation and social relatedness or exploring alternatives and commitment they can achieve a final and successful stage of identity formation characterized by psychosocial maturity and a coherent sense of the self as an independent person. In contrast to early approaches to identity, we emphasize the importance of viewing development as a context-specific process that is affected by the environment, with leisure providing one context that can facilitate these identity formation processes.

Social Identity and Leisure

The concept of social identity, as discussed in social psychology, is conceptualized as the part of the self-concept that relates to belonging to groups, in addition to the emotions and value the person associates with this belonging (Tajfel, 1982; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Because leisure includes both interpersonal and intergroup interactions, it contributes to the definition of a social identity in adolescence (Doise, 1996). Leisure groups are an important source of social identity and one of the

main contexts in which belonging to a group has a positive motivational basis (Argyle, 1996). For Argyle, the majority of leisure activities serve to enhance intergroup cooperation and promote a higher level of acceptance of other groups.

Social interaction integrates both interpersonal and intergroup relationships (Doise, 1988), and as highlighted by Abrams (1989), the study of adolescence needs to integrate these sociopsychological processes. Researchers interested in a psychosocial study of leisure and identity should continue to identify the circumstances under which leisure contexts facilitate the successful integration of personal and social identity and the developmental benefits that may accrue from using leisure to integrate these two components of identity (Kivel & Kleiber, 2000).

One of the key developmental characteristics of adolescence is the change in socially defined group belonging or group category. Adolescents move from being children to being adolescents, and this is a major social transformation in all societies (Durkin, 1998). Leisure, as a social context in which social comparison is strongly present, integrates all these behaviors and relationships (personal as well as social), making this an important issue in the understanding of adolescent development. The categorization process is of great relevance in adolescence, considering the associated development of sociocognitive structures and social identity theory emphasizes the role of the categorization process in comprehending the external world. The adolescent acquires new cognitive skills that give him/her a new framework with which to analyze the external world. This process makes these aspects of social identity extremely relevant to development (Doise, 1996). In fact, social identity integrates two dimensions: the cognitive and motivational. The first relates to the categorization and evaluation of in- and out-groups relations. The second is associated with the search for positive self-esteem, which makes intergroup differentiation relevant (Deschamps & Devos, 1998). Leisure is a major context for social identity formation, because most leisure situations are mediated by group belonging or inclusion in a particular group.

Place Identity and Leisure

The concept of place identity was developed by Proshansky (1978) and brought a different perspective to the study of identity. According to this approach inside environmental psychology, the subjective self is defined and expressed not only through social relationships with others, but also through relationships with the physical contexts that structure daily life (Proshansky, Fabian, & Kaminoff, 1983; Proshansky, Nelson-Schulman, & Kaminoff, 1979). Place identity is part of the identity process, leading to the emergence of cognitions related to the physical environments of the past, present, or future that define a person's daily existence through a sense of belonging. Although place identity focuses on the physical environment, authors who take this perspective do not exclude the social dimensions of places: there are no places without social associations or social relationships that occur outside a physical environment.

The processes underlying one's self-definition within society are not restricted to the distinctions between oneself and significant others but also embrace objects, things, spaces, and places. Once a place has a relevant role in the personal satisfaction of an individual's biological, psychological, social, and cultural needs, it assumes an important function in the identity process. Psychological bonds between the self and the sociophysical environment emerge from the relationship between an individual, others, and that places that help to develop group and individual identity (Brown, Perkins, & Brown, 2002; Kyle, Mowen, & Tarrant, 2004). Place identity can thus be considered as a substructure of personal identity and consists of general thoughts and feelings about the physical world in which the individual interacts (Bonnes & Secchiarolli, 1995). This component of the self is defined as the "ecological self" (Neisser, 1988).

Another component of place identity is place attachment, which occurs when we develop positive and negative feelings about our surroundings or specific places (Jack, 2010). It is not only the physical characteristics of a place that lead to positive place attachment but the happy social interactions or life events that occur there. The emotional meaning of a place emerges from what the place symbolizes for the person (Williams & Roggenbuck, 1989). As stated by Kyle, Graefe, Manning, and Bacon (2003, p. 251), "a place may be viewed as an essential part of one's self, resulting in strong emotional attachment to places." These authors suggest that engaging in leisure activities is frequently an antecedent to place attachment.

These aspects lead us to consider leisure as an opportunity to construct categories of places with strong emotional and positive interactions. According to Mowl and Towner (1995), each place, with its physical structure and social environment, can offer an important set of opportunities that facilitate involvement in leisure activities and a set of constraints that can limit it. Therefore, the authors argue, place is a very important factor that promotes quality in leisure activities. "We choose leisure activities not merely because they are useful for leisure, but to convey the very sense of who we are" (Williams, 2002, p. 353). The greater diversity of leisure places an individual experiences, the more opportunities the individual has to create cognitive categories that include the characteristics of the places and the individual-environment interactions that leisure places promote.

According to this perspective, adolescent identity can also be promoted through leisure places.

Positive Identity Development and Optimal Leisure

From a conceptual point of view, it is our objective to identify the relationship between leisure experience components and identity development processes. In fact, both concepts (leisure and identity) can be structured according to the same three levels of analysis and complexity: the personal, the social, and the ecological, making leisure a facilitator of positive adolescent development throughout daily life (Freire & Soares, 2000). This conceptual relationship is presented in Fig. 4.2.

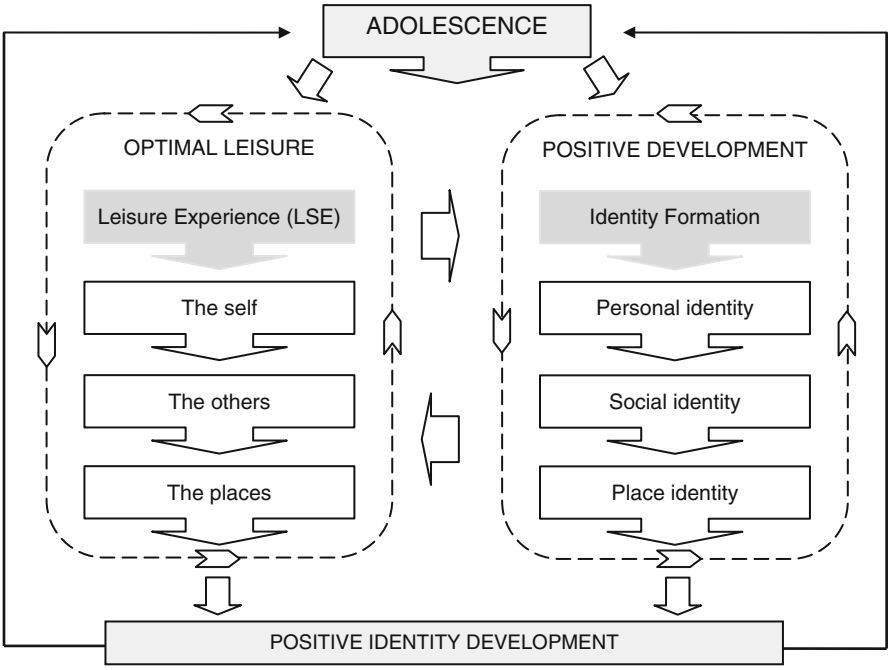

Fig. 4.2 The process of positive identity development in adolescence: the conceptual relation between optimal leisure and positive development

As the figure shows, this relationship expresses the psychosocial-ecological approach that underlines our view of leisure as subjective experience (integrating personal, social, and place features) that promotes adolescent identity in a positive way. When leisure experience occurs throughout the three levels or components (optimal leisure), adolescents are more involved and engaged in leisure activities, and as a consequence, they can learn more about the self and the external world. This involvement fosters self-knowledge and self-construction, which contributes to positive identity building (Freire, 2006b). Life contexts and associated experiences become a main source for identity formation, defining a dialectic process between the person and the environment (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1993). It is within this process that personal growth occurs with increasing strengths and capabilities.

This approach shows the circularity of these processes in and between SLE and identity. The process of participating in leisure activities that promotes the three components influence adolescents' self-complexity, thereby making them more aware of their own responsibility in leisure choices. They become more conscious in defining what is best for them as healthy and responsible adolescents. Positive identity development is thus facilitated by involvement in activities that provide personal, social, and place opportunities to shape subjective experiences in everyday life. An important aspect is the bidirectional influence between leisure experience and identity development, which must to be considered

particularly when investigating the causality of the relationship between leisure participation and positive outcomes, such as psychological well-being associated to positive development (Trainor et al., 2010).

This conceptual approach about the process of positive identity development in adolescence is the basic framework of a group intervention program titled "Growing-up with leisure …" (Freire, 1999, 2000, 2006b), aimed at helping adolescents become active agents of their own development and the contexts in which they live. Through aspects directly related to leisure experience, the entire development process is made intentional, taking into account personal dimensions, social interactions, and interaction with life places, as discussed earlier in this chapter. We claim that adolescents can learn this and, in so doing, become more self-oriented and proactive, which in turn benefits their life-span developmental patterns. They become producers of their lives, using leisure as a means of building their biography or identity. In this intervention program, adolescents work on leisure as a daily experience that promotes the development of their own identity. Using a pre- and posttest design with a control group, results clearly showed that the participation in the program promoted participants' leisure experience and self-concept and that these positive effects were related to the program itself (Freire, 2006b).

Our perspective about positive identity development through leisure experience is an important conceptual tool for studying general developmental processes in adolescence and the developmental impact of being involved in certain types of activities on a regular and daily basis. More importantly, it is the possibility of discovering processes that highlight new directions in the study of leisure experience and positive development, shedding light on leisure-supported intervention processes and strategies that promote positive adolescent development.

Conclusion and Future Perspectives

Currently, leisure is a major context in peoples' lives. This is especially true in adolescence, which is characterized by the search for an identity that permits the individual to be connected with the social and physical world. Undoubtedly, leisure can provide a real-life laboratory for research about behavior and sociocognitive dimensions of subjective experience. This conclusion underlines relevance of studying leisure in positive psychology, making relevant the emergence of a *positive leisure science* perspective as a specific scientific domain.

The way we propose and define the leisure concept highlights the need to cross disciplinary boundaries. Our psychosocial-environmental approach encompasses contributions from different domains in psychology, such as developmental psychology, social psychology, and environmental psychology. This contribution can go further and bring together other scientific fields outside psychology. This shows that the future direction of leisure studies should be one of positive leisure science. We propose a holistic knowledge about adolescent development that allows a more complete understanding of how they can act and interact in a healthy way with

themselves and their social and physical worlds. To put leisure experience at the heart of multiple systems of knowledge is one new and challenging line of research that must be applied to a positive leisure science perspective. Again, the challenge is multidisciplinary, integrating multiple levels of analysis that create new variables to be studied: from problems and pathology (deficit), through normative, to potentiality (enhancement). Leisure as a complex and multidimensional concept can also be a central issue connecting several perspectives and approaches about adolescence aimed at improving the positive development of adolescents. Associated with this conceptual framework, it is important to highlight the role of innovative methods and methodologies in collecting data about adolescents' daily lives. We have been using on-line or real-time measures with Portuguese adolescents, such as the experience sampling method (ESM), as firstly developed by Csikszentmihalyi, Larson, and Prescott (1977), as well as traditional self-report measures in order to increase knowledge about several variables that simultaneously shape the quality of leisure subjective experience (LSE). More empirical studies are being conducted with Portuguese adolescents to validate our conceptual framework about an integrative approach on positive identity development through leisure experience. This is a new challenge for future leisure studies, mainly if different scientific fields/domains are being articulated.

Despite conceptual and methodological issues, all of the aspects highlighted in this chapter also have notable impact in intervention processes in adolescence aimed at promoting positive development. Future interventions must simultaneously integrate these different components and levels of analysis: the personal, the social, and the ecological. These variables are equally important, and by simply articulating them, it is possible to effectively intervene and lead adolescents along the most valuable path for growth and development.

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Chapter 5
Positive Leisure Science: Leisure in Family Contexts

Ramon B. Zabriskie and Tess Kay

Introduction

The family is the fundamental unit of society – perhaps the 'oldest and most resilient' of all human institutions (DeFrain & Asay, 2007, p. 2). Today, challenges both within families and in their social environment have however caused many to view families as weak and troubled (Nock, 1998) and as 'demoralised' institutions (VanDenBerghe, 2000, pp. 16–17). 'Family' has risen to prominence as a focus for concern as patterns of diversity and change have become evident, with increased levels of family 'breakdown' eroding the traditional structures on which many welfare states were predicated and in which much moral worth has been invested (Kay, 2006a). Family leisure has consistently been identified as one of the most significant behavioural characteristics related to positive family outcomes such as family closeness, bonding, wellness and overall family functioning (Hawkes, 1991; Zabriskie & Freeman, 2004). In fact, some scholars suggest that leisure is the single most important force promoting cohesive, healthy relationships between husbands and wives and between parents and their children (Couchman, 1982). This chapter, therefore, examines the contribution and significance of family leisure in family life and its implications for individual and collective well-being and highlights its value to academic analysis as a focus for unpicking the dynamics of family at the micro level.

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Research into Family and Leisure

A long tradition of family leisure research has demonstrated the pivotal role of leisure in family life. From as early as the 1930s, leisure study scholars have reported a relationship between joint family leisure participation and positive family outcomes (Hawkes, 1991). Shared family leisure experiences have been consistently associated with positive family benefits, leading Hawkes to conclude that six decades of family leisure research had clearly established that 'family strength or cohesiveness is related to the family's use of leisure time' (p. 424).

Building on this evidence base, contemporary leisure researchers have sought fuller and more detailed understanding of the family leisure phenomena, recognising a need to address:

- The lack of theoretical underpinning of early family leisure research, as highlighted by authors such as Holman and Epperson (1989) and Orthner and Mancini (1991)
- The relatively narrow focus of most early studies on 'traditional' family types, i.e. married heterosexual parents living with their biological children, to the neglect of other family structures (e.g. lone parents, extended families, 'reconstituted' (second marriage) families, families with non-resident fathers, families headed by gay parents)
- The reliance on adult voices to provide perspectives on family leisure for all family members and the omission of children and young people's voices from research processes
- The historical operationalisation of 'family leisure' in simplistic and inconsistent ways, ranging from approaches which classed almost any time family members spent together as leisure to those which defined participation according to lists of activities, often allocated to categories which had been designated with no specific theoretical basis

In response to these critiques, scholars have called for more research that utilises qualitative methodologies that allow researchers to access the deeper meaning and impact of family leisure and obtain multiple perspectives within families and, from this, embark on the hypothesis conception and theory generation clearly needed in this field (Holman & Epperson, 1989; Orthner & Mancini, 1991). This has resulted in 'a resurgence of interest in family leisure and a dramatic increase in family leisure research' (Poff, Zabriskie, & Townsend, 2010a). The new era brought new theoretical frameworks and methodologies; use of more sophisticated designs, in-depth inquiries, and multiple perspectives; and a willingness to examine a vast array of diverse family structures and wide variety of related family variables which yielded a virtual explosion of new understanding related to family leisure.

This work has included a range of studies which focus specifically on how family leisure contributes to family well-being, functioning, and overall quality of family life and thus plays its role in positive leisure science. Foremost among this research is arguably Shaw and Dawson's (2001) examination of family leisure among fathers,

mothers, and pre-teen children from both dual- and single-parent families, which reported family leisure to be pivotal and highly valued from all perspectives of those they interviewed. Parents reported family leisure as essential for reasons related to improving family functioning including family interaction, communication, bonding and cohesion as well as for its perceived benefits for their children such as learning positive values and healthy lifestyles. One of the most significant contributions of this line of study was the authors' conclusion that the essence of family leisure did not really fit with accepted leisure definitions that 'emphasize free choice, intrinsic motivation, and enjoyment' but that family leisure was instead 'a form of purposive leisure, which is planned, facilitated, and executed by parents in order to achieve particular short- and long-term goals' (p. 228). Parents 'consciously and deliberately' used family leisure activities to improve family relationships, enhance family communication, promote health and fitness, teach and instil values and create family unity and identity. Parents reported that family leisure was so integral to healthy family life that it was with a 'sense of urgency' that they planned to spend time with children participating in family activities.

Another key finding in this body of work on the contribution of leisure to family well-being, functioning and overall quality of family life was the relative underplaying of gender differentiation. In contrast to findings of earlier studies of family leisure (e.g. Freysinger, 1994; Kay, 1998, 2001; Larson & Richards, 1994; Shaw, 1992), the research of the last decade shows greater comparability between male and female perspectives, with men expressing similar attitudes to those of women in seeing themselves as 'involved parents who were very much concerned about the benefits and outcomes of family participation' (Shaw & Dawson, 2001, p. 229). Such findings may reflect cultural change in the image of fatherhood as described as *new fathering* (Marsiglio, 1991) and *generative fathering* (Brotherson, Dollahite, & Hawkins, 2005; Kay, 2009). Shaw and Dawson reported that both parents agreed that the primary 'purpose of family leisure was to enhance family functioning and to provide benefits to their children rather than to experience personal enjoyment, self-development, or relaxation' (pp. 229–230) for themselves. Although leisure outcomes and satisfactions did occur for parents, they tended to be by-products and secondary in nature. Further research by Mactavish and Schleien (1998) among families that included a child with a developmental disability, and by Harrington (2005) with Australian two-parent families, also identified the intentional nature of family leisure and its value in building and strengthening family relationships.

The evidence reviewed above identifies a significant role for leisure in family life. Leisure is particularly prominent in parent-child interactions but also plays a significant role in the partnerships of parents. Positive leisure experiences are valued for their contributions to the lives of individual family members, for their role in sustaining relationships between them and for the function they perform in providing shared experiences and creating a sense of 'whole family' identity. The 'fun' and 'pleasurable' connotations of leisure should not, therefore, obscure the importance of the opportunities they provide to fulfil the serious functions of generativity and intimacy (Kay, 2003), a theme especially evident in research into the role of leisure in fathering (Kay, 2004, 2006b, 2006c, 2009).

Leisure in family contexts is not, however, unproblematic. Family members may struggle to access sufficient leisure time and be unable to nurture the relationships that sustain the family unit. Parents may feel particularly unlikely to prioritise their own leisure needs in the face of a child-centred ideology of parenting, and leisure may also be a site for the reproduction of gender inequity. Constraints to, and dissatisfaction with, leisure may also stem from and contribute to underlying tensions in family life. The unstructured and fluid nature of leisure can provide a difficult environment for negotiating the emotional landscape of intimate relationships (Kay, 2003). It is in the context of these continuing contradictions that scholars have sought to develop a systematic approach to evaluating the relationship between leisure and family functioning.

New Theoretical Framework for Family Leisure Study

At the same time that qualitative scholars were learning rich new details and identifying new questions about family leisure among smaller more intimate samples of families, another line of study was responding to the call for increased use of theory and new theoretical development. Grounded in the data from a qualitative study, a new theoretical model of family leisure functioning was developed that fits well with family systems theory (for a complete discussion of family leisure and family systems theory, see Zabriskie & McCormick, 2001). The model suggested that there was a direct relationship between different kinds of family leisure and different aspects of family functioning.

Leisure theorists have long identified a duality in individual behaviour. Kelly (1999) recognised two main types of leisure most individuals engage in throughout the lifespan. The first is consistent, ongoing and easily accessible through the life course, while the other is opposite in nature, adds variety, is less accessible and stable, and often changes throughout the life course. Similarly, Iso-Ahola (1984) suggested that individual leisure behaviour was influenced by two opposing forces and that people tend to 'seek both stability and change, structure and variety, and familiarity and novelty in [their] leisure' (p. 98). That is, individuals tend to meet basic human needs for both stability and change through their leisure behaviour. Freeman and Zabriskie (2003) explained that this interplay and balance between stability and change plays a much greater role when considering the needs of a family as a whole. They clarified that the balance of these needs is an underlying concept of family systems theory which indicates that families continually seek a dynamic state of homeostasis. In other words, families must both meet the need for stability in interactions, structure and relationships and the need for novelty in experience, input and challenge, in order to function effectively (Klein & White, 1996). The core and balance model of family leisure functioning (Zabriskie & McCormick, 2001) was developed to help explain this phenomenon and provides a theoretical framework which suggests that families also tend to meet these critical needs in the context of their leisure behaviour (see Fig. 5.1).

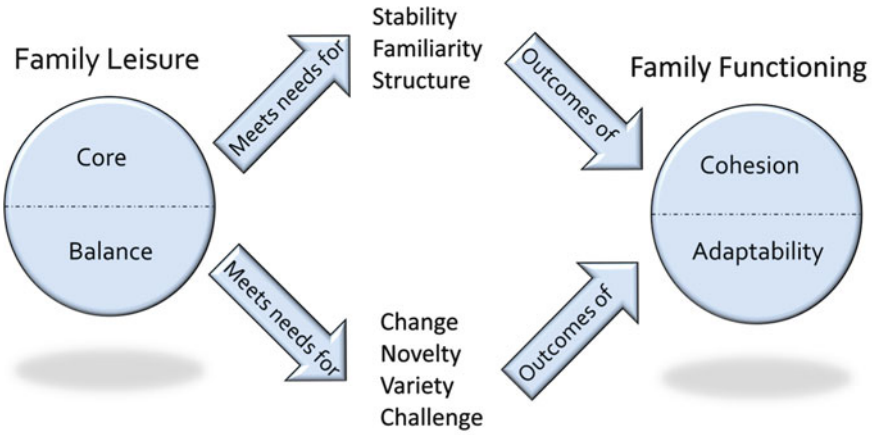

Fig. 5.1 Core and balance model of family leisure functioning

The Core and Balance Model of Family Leisure Functioning

The core and balance model indicates that there are two basic categories or patterns of family leisure, core and balance, which families utilise to meet the needs for both stability and change and ultimately facilitate outcomes of family cohesion and adaptability which are primary components of family functioning. Core family leisure includes 'common, everyday, low-cost, relatively accessible, often home-based activities that many families do frequently' (Zabriskie & McCormick, 2003, p. 168). This may include family activities such as playing board games together, making and eating dinner together, watching DVDs or television together in the home, playing in the yard, gardening together, shooting hoops in the driveway or simply jumping in the pile of leaves once the raking is done. Such activities often require minimal planning and resources, are quite spontaneous or informal, and provide a safe, consistent and typically positive context in which family relationships tend to be enriched and feelings of family closeness increased.

Balance family leisure, on the other hand, is 'depicted by activities that are generally less common, less frequent, more out of the ordinary, and usually not home-based thus providing novel experiences' (Zabriskie & McCormick, 2003, p. 168). This may include family activities such as vacations, camping, fishing, special events, and trips to sporting events, theme parks, or the bowling alley. Such activities often require more investment of resources such as planning, time, effort, or money and are, therefore, less spontaneous and more formalised. They tend to be more out of the ordinary and 'include elements of unpredictability or novelty, which require family members to negotiate and adapt to new input and experiences that stand apart from everyday life' (Freeman & Zabriskie, 2003, p. 77). They expose family members to unfamiliar stimuli from the environment and new challenges within a leisure context, requiring them to learn, adapt, and progress as a family unit.

Overall, the model suggests that core family leisure primarily meets family needs for familiarity and stability and tends to facilitate feelings of closeness, personal relatedness, family identity, bonding, and cohesion. Balance family leisure, on the other hand, primarily meets family needs for novelty and change by providing the input necessary for families to challenge, to develop, to adapt, and to progress as a working unit and helps foster the adaptive skills necessary to navigate the challenges of family life in today's society. Family systems theory (Olson, 1986) holds that these two constructs, family cohesion and family adaptability, are both necessary and are the primary components of healthy family functioning and wellness. Similarly, findings (Freeman & Zabriskie, 2003; Zabriskie & McCormick, 2001) related to the core and balance model suggest that involvement in both categories of family leisure is essential and that families who regularly participate in both core and balance types of family leisure report higher levels of family functioning than those who participate in high or low amounts of either category. Families who primarily participate in one category without the other are likely to experience disarray, frustration, and dysfunction.

These concepts underpinning the model can be illustrated by considering the following family situations.

No Core. The Anderson family consists of mother, father, and their two teenagers, John, age 16, and Amy, age 14. All four have hectic lives and spend very little time together as a family. They often pass in the night or early in the mornings headed out in different directions for the day. They rarely eat dinner together and participate in very few, if any, core family leisure activities. When the mother confronts Amy about possible drug use and other behavioural concerns, a fight ensues, during which Amy yells that John does things that are much worse. The concerned parents discuss how to 'save' their family and decide to go on a family vacation to Disneyland that they had promised the children for years to get away from everyday stresses and bond as a family. When their children react negatively and complain that they will miss important activities with their friends, the parents become even more determined to go away to have some 'fun' and fix their family. Not too surprisingly, the trip is not a success. In the absence of the basic cohesive relationships and the related family skills that are developed during core types of family activities, the flexibility required by the sudden introduction of a balance type of family activity begins to 'overwhelm the family system resulting in chaos including arguments, frustration, blaming, and guilt' (Zabriskie & Freeman, 2004, p. 56). In other words, without some foundation of core family leisure involvement, participation in balance family activities is not only less effective but may actually be disruptive to the family and lead to more harm than good.

No Balance. In a contrasting example, the Jenkins family has four children, and the oldest is just about to turn 16. They have a very structured and protected home life and have always participated exclusively in large amounts of core types of family activities. In fact, everything is done together, and very little, if any, outside influence or people are allowed in. They have little social interaction with others, little experience in the community, and have never been on a family vacation or outing. Rich in 'core' leisure but limited in less routine activities, a family in this situation may not have the necessary skills and abilities to handle unpredictable situations

and remain intact. It is likely that they would be ill prepared to effectively adjust or adapt to difficult circumstances or many other out-of-the-ordinary stresses and challenges that abound in today's society.

Both Core and Balance. The third family regularly participates in both core and balance types of family activities. The Johnson family has four children ages 7, 9, 12, and 15. Although the parents both work full time, they consciously choose to do things together regularly as a family and plan their schedules accordingly. They have family dinner together most evenings, and this is typically followed by helping with homework, shooting baskets in the driveway, or watching their favourite television show together. Often they all go to watch the eldest daughter's play performance and the younger daughter's piano recital or to cheer for the boys at their basketball or soccer games. Occasionally they plan outings such as bowling, going to the local theme park or museum, or attending the fair when it is in town. Sunday afternoons are informally reserved to bake cookies and play games. The kids often bring their best friends who join in the family battles of Pictionary, Monopoly, Catch Phrase, Sorry, Pit, or Ultimate Uno.

The family decides their next big family outing will be to go camping on a weekend 5 weeks away. They begin to make plans, and over the next few weeks, while they continue to participate in their regular core types of activities, they also look forward to the camping trip. When the day finally arrives, they find the perfect campsite and set up the tent. But soon the wind begins to blow, the clouds roll in, and lightning flashes. A few sparse drops turned into a downpour in minutes, and they are drenched! Does this cause upset and anger? Do the parents yell or blame each other or the kids for ruining the trip? Typically not, because it is 'fun'; they have chosen to be there and looked forward to it for some time. In such a 'leisure' context, people tend to make external attributions (it is the weather, it is out of our control) and be much more proactive in how they adjust, adapt, or deal with unforeseen circumstances or stress because it is 'leisure' or a 'step away from real life' and part of the experience. A family such as this is likely to have the skills, resiliency, and connectedness to be able to adjust, adapt, or even thrive when faced with the plethora of 'real-life' stresses and challenges that abound in today's society.

The above illustrations suggest that family involvement in both categories of family leisure is important and that core family leisure may play a particularly meaningful role in family leisure functioning. This has been consistently supported by studies that have applied the core and balance model (Zabriskie, 2000; Zabriskie & McCormick, 2001). The development of an empirically supported model has played a crucial role in family leisure research by providing a consistent theoretical framework from which to interpret results and findings as well as to base further questions and new hypotheses. It also provided a consistent framework for the development of related instruments such as the Family Leisure Activity Profile (FLAP) and the Family Leisure Satisfaction Scale (FLSS) which allowed researchers to examine family leisure functioning among large samples of diverse types of families from multiple different perspectives. While studies consistently supported the tenants of the core and balance model, researchers also called for known group studies

among large samples of families with known characteristics in order to further examine its construct validity and predictive ability.

Known Group Studies

As scholars responded and began to conduct a variety of known group studies, they not only found that by examining large samples of families with known characteristics, they could provide further construct-related evidence of validity for the core and balance model but, more importantly, that the model provided a consistent theoretical framework that allowed researchers to create 'testable theoretical propositions' (Holman & Epperson, 1989, p. 291) among diverse family samples. New lines of study within family leisure began to flourish, and hand in hand with continued qualitative examinations among similar family samples, scholars began to gain even greater understanding into the family leisure phenomenon and its contribution to positive leisure science. Some of these included examinations of family leisure functioning among adoptive families (Freeman & Zabriskie, 2003), families with a child with a disability (Dodd, Zabriskie, Widmer, & Eggett, 2009; Mactavish & Schleien, 1998), single-parent families (Hornberger, Zabriskie, & Freeman, 2010; Hutchinson, Afifi, & Krause, 2007; Smith, Taylor, Hill, & Zabriskie, 2004), non-resident father's families (Swinton, Freeman, Zabriskie, & Fields, 2008), father's involvement in traditional dual-parent families (Buswell, 2010; Harrington, 2006; Kay, 2009), families with a child in mental health treatment (Townsend & Zabriskie, 2010), families with a child with symptoms of eating disorders (Baker, 2004), Samoan families (Fotu, 2007), and Mexican-American families (Christenson, Zabriskie, Eggett, & Freeman, 2006). Family leisure researchers were now more able to consistently evaluate similar family variables from multiple family perspectives including both parents and children. For the purpose of this chapter, we will summarise findings from only a few of these areas.

Adoptive Families

Among the first of the known group studies within this framework was an examination of intact transracial adoptive families. The extant literature had consistently reported that intact adoptive families had higher levels of family cohesion and adaptability than normative non-adoptive families when compared to established norms (Groze & Rosenthal, 1991; Zabriskie & Freeman, 2004), yet no studies had made direct comparisons between two samples of adoptive and non-adoptive families with similar frameworks and measurements. Furthermore, no studies had managed to identify specific family behaviours related to these characteristics even though scholars (Erich & Leung, 1998; Groze & Rosenthal, 1991) had clearly indicated that family leisure was highly valued among these families.

When comparing a sample of transracial adoptive families ($n = 197$ parents and $n = 56$ youth respondents) to a broad sample of biological families ($n = 179$ parents and $n = 179$ youth respondents), Zabriskie and Freeman (2004) hypothesised according to the tenants of the core and balance model that since the literature indicated that intact adoptive families report higher levels of family functioning when compared to biological families, they should also report higher levels of family leisure involvement. Findings indeed reported higher family cohesion, adaptability, and overall family functioning as well as higher core, balance, and total family leisure involvement among the adoptive sample and were the first to do so from direct comparisons and from multiple perspectives. Furthermore, findings indicated positive relationships between family leisure variables and family functioning variables, and authors reported that when considering other socio-demographic characteristics such as age, gender, race, family size, religion, history of divorce, and annual family income, family leisure involvement was the only significant predictor of family functioning. Additional findings also identified the essential nature of core family leisure particularly from the youth and family perspectives, and authors concluded that 'families in this sample indicated that regular involvement in common every day, low-cost, relatively accessible and often home-based activities with family members was the best predictor of aspects of family functioning such as emotions closeness, feelings of connectedness, mutual respect and a family system's ability to be flexible in roles, rules, and relationships' (Freeman & Zabriskie, 2003, pp. 88–89).

Findings from this study provided 'new evidence related to the viability and continued use of the Core and Balance Model …, further construct related evidence of validity and support for the predictability of the model' (Zabriskie & Freeman, 2004, p. 74). The use of a sound theoretical framework also allowed authors to provide some 'explanation as to why intact adoptive families consistently report higher levels of family functioning and family leisure involvement than biological families' (p. 72). It also allowed authors to provide clear direction to professionals and policymakers related to identifying specific types of family leisure involvement as a valuable, practical, and cost-effective behavioural approach to help foster increased family functioning among adoptive families.

Families That Include Children with Developmental Disabilities

Another emerging line of family leisure research examined family leisure among families that included children with developmental disabilities. Researchers in this area had not only focused on identifying and describing differences in family leisure patterns for these families but had identified relationships to a variety of outcomes attributed to their family leisure involvement. Parents in one study (Scholl, McAvoy, Rynders, & Smith, 2003) reported that increased confidence in their family as a unit, increased awareness of family skill level and support needs, and meeting other families with similar challenges were critical benefits of family leisure participation. Mactavish and Schleien (1998) found that these families viewed family leisure as a

means for promoting overall quality of family life (e.g. family unity, satisfaction, physical and mental health) and for helping family members develop other life skills such as problem solving, compromising, and negotiation. They also found that family leisure benefits appeared to be most effective with the entire family, much more than for parents alone (see above).

One concern in this area of study was that researchers historically suggested that children with disabilities damaged their families and created a high degree of pathology in their family functioning, resulting in disabled families (Ferguson, 2002). Because such families reported increased pressure and demands along with added stress and challenges (Dyson, 1996), it was assumed that they were also lower functioning. More recent studies continued to report mixed results regarding aspects of family functioning, while others (Ferguson, 2002; Taunt & Hastings, 2002) began to suggest that families of children with disabilities could adjust and cope effectively and function at or near normal levels based on established norms for families in general.

Dodd et al. (2009) used the core and balance framework to make direct statistical comparisons between families of children with developmental disabilities ($n = 144$ parents and $n = 60$ youth siblings) and a concurrently collected national sample of normative families ($n = 343$ parents and $n = 343$ youth). They reported no significant differences between the two samples in family cohesion, adaptability, or overall family functioning, as well as no significant differences in core, balance, or total family leisure involvement from multiple perspectives. Authors also began to answer the call for improved understanding of 'family life, factors that contribute to effective family functioning, and the role of leisure in this process' (Mactavish & Schleien, 2004, p. 125) among these families. Findings collaborated and added clear support to previous work and did so with a different methodological approach and a broader more representative sample. The findings confirmed the significance of leisure.

Further findings also added considerable insight to previous works by reporting significant multivariate relationships between core family leisure and family cohesion, adaptability, and overall family functioning from parent, youth, and family perspectives. 'Even when taking into account other family characteristics such as the level of support needed by the child with the disability, time the child has been in the home, income, history of divorce, age, ethnicity, and family size, the strongest predictor of higher family functioning was specifically core family leisure involvement. In other words, families who participated in board games, home meals, gardening, spontaneous activities in the yard, and reading books, etc. had higher levels of family functioning' (Dodd et al., 2009, p. 280). For the first time within the core and balance line of study, core family leisure was not only a stronger predictor but was the only predictor of all three family functioning variables from the parent perspective. In fact, 'it was the only significant predictor of family functioning from all three perspectives (parent, youth, and family)' (p. 281). Authors concluded that core family leisure involvement clearly played an even more essential role in terms of family functioning

for families of children with developmental disabilities and were able to provide specific directions for professionals and researchers regarding this population.

Single-Parent Families

Much research on single-parent families focuses on the problems they face and is slanted towards discovering challenges and possible dysfunction (Olson & Haynes, 1993; Richards & Schmiege, 1993). The overall effect of focusing on the negative aspects of these families also adds to the 'perpetuation of negative societal stereotypes' (Olson & Haynes, p. 260). Larson, Dworkin, and Gillman (2001) reported, however, that 'many families adapt well to a one-parent household structure and provide a positive environment that facilitates the development of children and adolescents' (p. 143). The limited research regarding family leisure (Hutchinson et al., 2007; Smith et al., 2004) suggested a strong relationship with family functioning among single-parent families. Regarding a sample of young adults raised in a single-parent home, Smith et al. reported 'a relatively strong relationship between family leisure involvement and family functioning among those in a single-parent family structure' (p. 53).

Hornberger et al. (2010) used the core and balance framework in an effort to clarify the difference or similarities between single- and dual-parent families as well as to further examine the nature of family leisure relationships. They compared large samples of single-parent ($n=362$ parents and $n=362$ youth) and dual-parent ($n=495$ parents and $n=495$ youth) families and reported almost no difference in family cohesion, adaptability, or overall family functioning, thus contradicting the negative stereotypes and adding to the growing body of literature that suggests that 'many families adapt well to a one-parent household structure' (Larson et al., 2001, p. 143) and can be 'as healthy and well-functioning as any other family' (p. 155). Authors concluded that 'Even though single-parent families do face challenges, it cannot be assumed that they will not succeed, that they cannot negotiate possible constraints, and that they will automatically function lower than dual-parent families based solely on their structure' (Hornberger et al. p. 156).

Findings also supported previous studies (Hutchinson et al, 2007; Smith et al., 2004) that identified family leisure involvement as a critical behavioural characteristic related to family functioning particularly among single-parent families. The authors reported that although they reported less family leisure than dual-parent families, both core and balance family leisure involvement were the only significant predictors of family cohesion, adaptability, and overall family functioning even when considering other family characteristics such as age, gender, ethnicity, family size, and annual income. They supported the idea of a greater need for core family leisure among single-parent families and added details that such 'routine shared family activities were very important to help them stay connected, feel a sense of belonging,

and demonstrate care for each other, even when they were experiencing immediate conflict' (p. 40). They concluded that such home-based core family leisure 'helped to maintain a sense of continuity and stability post-divorce, and enables them to do things that made them "feel like family" in the face of changes in their family membership and structures' (p. 40).

Fathers and Family Leisure

Although the family literature has suggested an increase in father involvement in family work as well as some focus on father's play and relationships to child outcomes (Kay, 2009), few studies have examined a father's involvement in family leisure and consequent relationships to family outcomes. Qualitative findings from leisure researchers, however, have indicated that the father-child relationship is fostered and strengthened through father involvement in sport activities (Harrington, 2006), activities of recreation (e.g. camping, hunting, and picnicking), activities of play or learning (e.g. hide-and-seek, checkers, and word games) (Brotherson et al., 2005), and common activities such as cuddling on the couch or talking over dinner (Call, 2002). Buswell (2010) used the core and balance model as a framework to examine the contribution of father's involvement in family leisure to family outcomes such as family functioning in an effort to support qualitative findings from a broad sample of families.

Fathers ($n = 647$) and youth ($n = 647$) in her study reported that today's fathers are involved in nearly the same amount of core family leisure and slightly less balance family leisure than mothers and that their involvement in both core and balance family leisure were significant predictors of family cohesion, adaptability, and overall family functioning. Furthermore, the father's involvement in core family activities again stood out as the strongest predictor from both the father and youth perspectives which replicated Swinton et al.'s (2008) earlier findings, refuting the term 'Disneyland dad' so commonly attached to non-resident fathers like those in her study. Both authors concluded that although participation in balance family leisure activities is important and needed, it was fathers' involvement in the everyday, home-based family activities that held more weight than the large, extravagant, out-of-the-ordinary types of activities when examining aspects of family functioning.

Buswell's (2010) findings went one step further and found that when examining the quality or satisfaction with their family leisure involvement, both fathers and youth reported that core leisure satisfaction was the single greatest contributor to all aspects of family functioning even after controlling for socio-demographic variables such as income, family size, history of divorce, level of education, and unemployment. These findings emphasise that it is not simply the amount of involvement fathers spend in leisure activities with their children and family that is related to greater family functioning, but rather leisure provides a context through which quality, meaningful, and satisfying interactions may take place, which in turn predicts greater family functioning (Harrington, 2006; Kay, 2009). Buswell concluded that rather than the expensive family vacation, being satisfied with activities such as eating

dinner together, reading books, or playing board games with the father present was the single strongest predictor of all aspects of family functioning, particularly from the youth perspective.

Families with a Child in Mental Health Treatment

One of the most recent known group studies used the core and balance model as a framework to examine family leisure functioning among families with a child currently in mental health treatment. Townsend and Zabriskie (2010) hypothesised that if treatment families have low levels of family functioning as the literature indicates (Sunseri, 2004), they would also be likely to have low levels of family leisure involvement or participate in a way that the effect on family functioning is inconsequential or even negative. Frequent family participation in balance family activities such as vacations, outdoor adventure activities, or going to museums and theatres can be immediately impactful for a family in the short term but can have diminishing effects on the family as a whole in the long term if there is no participation in core family activities. They also hypothesised that there would be clear differences between treatment families and non-treatment families in family functioning variables and in family leisure patterns.

They compared a sample of families with an adolescent in a residential treatment centre ($n=181$) with a similar sample of non-treatment families ($n=343$) and found lower levels of family cohesion, adaptability, and overall family functioning as predicted. In terms of family leisure, the treatment families reported participating in significantly less core family leisure and slightly more balance family leisure than non-treatment families from both the parent and youth perspectives. Thus, consistent with the tenants of the model, the drastic difference between core and balance family leisure involvement among these families was related to lower family function (for further discussion, see Townsend & Zabriskie, 2010). Further findings confirmed the essential nature of family leisure involvement among these families which was the only significant predictor of family functioning variables after controlling for others. The responses from the adolescents in treatment again continued to support the essential nature of core family leisure particularly in terms of family cohesion and overall functioning. This was very different from the perspective of their affluent parents 'who perceived balance family leisure that required more investment of time and money such as trips, theme parks or resorts, to relate more to family cohesion' (p. 28). In other words, while adolescents in treatment may enjoy frequent vacations or out-of-the-ordinary activities, they still prefer to spend time at home with family members.

Other Related Family Variables

Although the above studies have consistently supported and refined tenants of the core and balance model, more importantly, they demonstrate how a sound theoretical

framework can help direct lines of family leisure research and provide the foundation necessary to compare findings from multiple methodologies and multiple perspectives. Furthermore, researchers have also used the core and balance model as a framework to examine the contributions of a variety of other related family constructs.

Smith, Freeman, and Zabriskie (2009) reported direct relationships between both core and balance family leisure and family communication from a youth perspective. They also used path analyses to report that family communication significantly mediated the relationship between core family leisure and family adaptability and between balance family leisure and family cohesion. Johnson, Zabriskie, and Hill (2006) used the core and balance framework to help clarify results from Orthner's (1975; Holeman & Jacquart, 1988) early line of marital satisfaction studies and reported that it was not the level or amount of couple leisure involvement or satisfaction with the amount of time couples spent together, but the satisfaction with joint leisure, particularly with core joint leisure, that contributed to marital satisfaction. Agate, Zabriskie, Agate, and Poff (2009) found that a family's satisfaction with their leisure involvement together was clearly the best predictor of overall satisfaction with or quality of family life among a sample of over 900 families in the USA. They also found that satisfaction with core family leisure was the single greatest predictor of satisfaction with family life and that it explained up to twice as much variance as balance family leisure satisfaction from a parent, youth, and family perspective. Zabriskie and McCormick (2003) used the same framework to report the contribution of family leisure involvement to the outcome variable of satisfaction with family life from parent and child perspectives.

Broad Integrated Models

Poff et al. (2010a) argued that 'the Core and Balance framework has presented the opportunity for researchers to consistently examine family leisure and related constructs such as family functioning, family communication, family leisure satisfaction, and satisfaction with family life, across samples and perspectives thus facilitating clear steps "to creating testable theoretical propositions"' (p. 370). Until recently, however, researchers have not been able to access large enough samples of families to afford the use of more sophisticated analyses to examine directional relationships of all of these family constructs at the same time. Therefore, in an effort to begin broad model construction and add insight between research variables, Poff et al. examined a sample of over 800 households ($n = 824$ parents and $n = 808$ youth) and presented structural equation models that suggested how family variables interrelate from both parent and youth perspectives (see Figs. 5.2 and 5.3).

Authors ultimately concluded that overall findings signified 'a clear mark of progress in the family leisure line of research and contribute, along with many other authors in the last decade, to a substantial and ongoing response to general criticisms

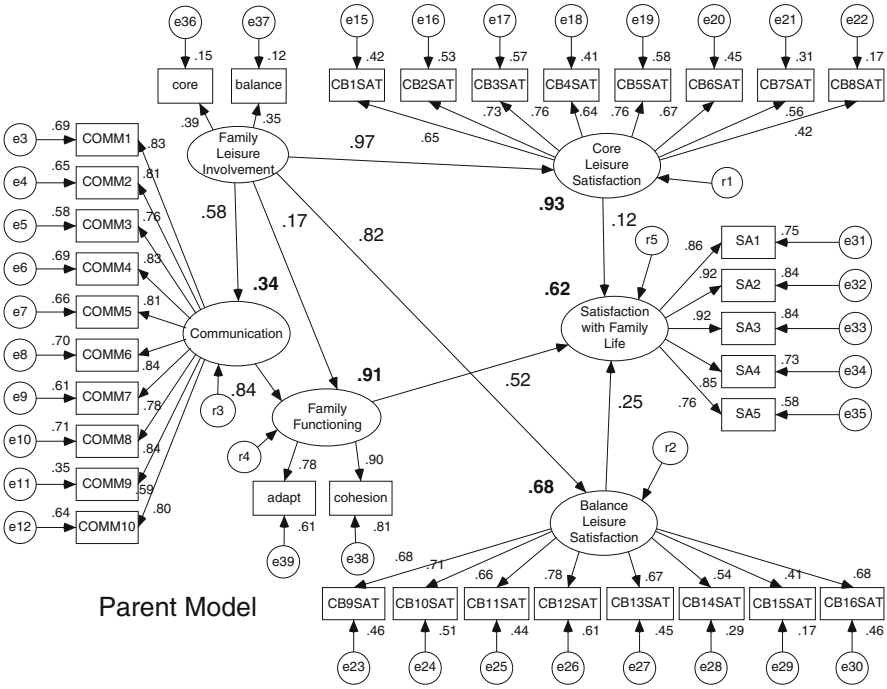

Fig. 5.2 Final parent structural equation model (standardised estimates) $p < .001$

and recommendations about family leisure research' (p. 386). Orthner and Mancini (1991) concluded their review of early family leisure literature stating that the quality and quantity of family leisure research was still deficient and that 'samples were small, measures of family variables were too difficult to compare, measures of leisure variables were similarly wide-ranging and difficult to compare, and that there had been little replication' (Poff et al., 2010a). It appears that in the last decade, such criticisms have been clearly addressed. Poff et al. reported that findings in their study alone 'represented replication of several previous studies using the same theoretical framework including at least ten addressing family leisure and family functioning, one addressing family leisure and family communication, three addressing family leisure satisfaction, and five addressing satisfaction with family life' (p. 387). Such results further illustrate the usefulness of a consistent model of family leisure by providing the necessary framework to begin the development of much broader models that begin 'to consider the intricacies and interrelationships between family leisure and several related family variables at the same time'. Authors recommended that these broad baseline models be used as a guiding framework for further study utilising analytical methods that facilitate family level analysis such as dyadic modelling and hierarchal linear modelling. They also called for 'the richer, deeper understanding and specific

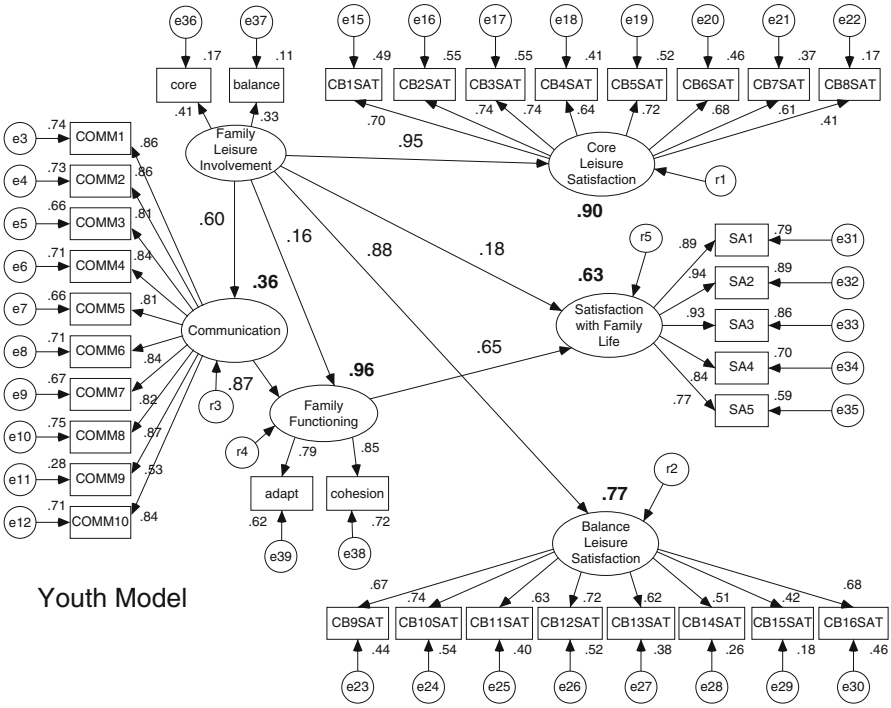

Fig. 5.3 Final youth structural equation model (standardised estimates) $p < .001$

meanings related to some of these broad family constructs afforded by continued qualitative studies' (p. 388). Finally, they suggested that the continuation of current efforts to examine large samples of families in other English (i.e. Canada, UK, New Zealand, and Australia (Poff, Zabriskie, & Townsend, 2010b)) and non-English speaking countries (Croatia, Germany, Turkey (Aslan, 2009)) using the core and balance framework would likely have 'both culture specific and broad implications' as well as help contribute to the increased effort to better understand the 'amount, types, and quality of family leisure that are most likely to influence family life' (p. 389).

Conclusion

Recent contributions to family leisure research by studies that have utilised the core and balance framework represent just one perspective in the diverse field of family leisure research. Many studies using other frameworks, including numerous qualitative inquiries, have contributed rich detail, considerable insight, and precious direction to our efforts towards understanding family leisure and its role within what continues to be the fundamental social unit in today's global community. Although

leisure in family contexts is not unproblematic and is not a panacea for all family problems, it has been empirically and inextricably related to the wellness, functioning, and quality of family life among families of all different structures and types.

In this context, the core and balance model has a special value in offering a framework within which the relationship between family functioning and family leisure can be scrutinised across different family types. The evidence it helps provide of the significance of leisure for the emotional health and wellness of families indicates that policy 'investment' in family leisure may therefore be fruitful. It is difficult however for policymakers to intervene in family life in a way that directly benefits leisure. While direct provision may be helpful, the most productive forms of support may be those that equip families to make the most of their leisure – such as effective work-life balance initiatives, leisure education campaigns focused on the value of daily home-based family activities, and appropriate systems of welfare assistance. In an era of increasing change and diversity in patterns of family formation and structure, supporting contemporary family life is a primary challenge for policymakers. The work of leisure scientists suggests that family leisure has a central role to play.

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Chapter 6
Leisure, Optimal Experience, and Psychological Selection: Cultural and Developmental Perspectives

Marta Bassi and Antonella Delle Fave

Introduction

The scientific literature on leisure has proposed different approaches to classify free time activities. However, there is a substantial convergence among authors in distinguishing between two broad typologies of leisure. The first typology refers to activities characterized by clear structure and rules, fostering engagement, fulfillment, and long-term commitment. It includes active leisure activities as defined by Csikszentmihalyi (1990); structured activities promoting concentration and effort toward goal achievement, as identified by Kleiber, Larson, and Csikszentmihalyi (1986); and serious leisure activities (Stebbins, 2001, 2007) that foster participants' long-term acquisition of special skills, knowledge, and experience. The second typology of leisure comprises activities requiring low energy investment and promoting relaxation (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990), unstructured tasks that provide pleasure and fun without high demands (Kubey & Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Larson & Kleiber, 1993), and casual leisure activities, immediately enjoyable and rewarding, relatively short-lived, and requiring little or no specialist training (Stebbins, 2007).

Both types of leisure have been analyzed in relation to individuals' well-being and development. On the one hand, casual leisure has been shown to bring about benefits such as buffering immediate stress or the impact of negative life events and sustaining coping efforts (Calbabiano, 1994; Iso-Ahola & Park, 1996; Iwasaki & Mannell, 2000; Patterson & Coleman, 1996). On the other hand, the notion of serious leisure emphasizes the potential of free time activities in promoting long-term commitment and skill cultivation (Dilley & Scraton, 2010). More recently, within the framework of positive psychology, researchers have stressed the role of leisure

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as a resource to foster posttraumatic growth and the development of resilience among people experiencing negative life events such as the onset of disabilities (Chung & Lee, 2010; Iwasaki, Mactavish, & Mackay, 2005; Kleiber, 2004).

Leisure has been widely investigated as a source of positive and rewarding states of consciousness, such as flow, or optimal experience (see Chap. 8 by Perkins and Nakamura in this volume). Flow is characterized by involvement, concentration, enjoyment, intrinsic motivation, and high environmental challenges balanced with high personal skills (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975; Csikszentmihalyi & Csikszentmihalyi, 1988). The associated activities are likely to be preferentially selected and cultivated in the long term. This lifelong process, described as psychological selection (Csikszentmihalyi & Massimini, 1985; Massimini & Delle Fave, 2000), promotes identity and competence building through the identification and pursuit of a well-defined set of goals and interests which uniquely characterize each individual's differentiation and social integration patterns. Individual resources and potentials, together with cultural and environmental influences, come into play within this lifelong process (Delle Fave, 2007). At the individual level, optimal experience has to be contextualized in the theoretical framework of daily psychological selection (Delle Fave, Massimini, & Bassi, 2011; Massimini & Delle Fave, 2000). Psychological selection results from the individuals' differential investment of attention and resources on the information available in their environment. This process is influenced by the cultural context, as well as by predispositions, previous experiences and their appraisal, hierarchy of priorities, and values that individuals ceaselessly build and shape throughout their lives.

Within the leisure domain, the activities prominently fostering the onset of optimal experience belong to the typology of structured or serious leisure: They mainly include sports, arts, and hobbies, that is, activities sustaining skill development by virtue of the person's engagement in facing complex challenges, at the same time providing fulfillment and intrinsic rewards (Abuhamdeh & Csikszentmihalyi, 2009; Csikszentmihalyi, 1975; Delle Fave & Bassi, 2003; Delle Fave, Bassi, & Massimini, 2003a; Jackson & Csikszentmihalyi, 1999). This chapter will focus on some of the major findings in the study of flow or optimal experience (Csikszentmihalyi & Csikszentmihalyi, 1988) in the domain of leisure. Our specific aim is to highlight the role of leisure in individual development and in the process of psychological selection, taking into account its interplay with other daily life domains and with the cultural context.

Studying Optimal Experience in Leisure: Instruments and Procedures

Research on optimal experience in leisure activities can rely on a wide range of instruments, such as the *Flow State Scale* (FSS; Jackson & Marsh, 1996) described by Perkins and Nakamura in this volume (Chap. 8). Another single-administration instrument is the *Flow Questionnaire* (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975) designed to investigate

the occurrence of optimal experience and its psychological features. In its most widely used version (Delle Fave, 2007; Delle Fave et al., 2010), participants are first asked to read three quotations describing optimal experience, to report whether they have ever had similar experiences in their life, and – if they have – to list the activities or situations associated with it (also defined as optimal activities). Subsequently, participants are asked to select from their list the activity associated with the most intense and pervasive flow conditions and to describe the experience reported during this activity through 0–8 point scales investigating cognitive, affective, and motivational variables: involvement, clear-cut feedback from the activity, wish to do the activity, enjoyment, perception of clear goals, challenges, skills, focus of attention, excitement, and relaxation. All the answers to the open-ended questions are coded and included into broader functional categories, derived from previous studies (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997; Delle Fave & Massimini, 1991, 2004a). To evaluate the quality of experience during the selected optimal activities, mean scores are calculated for each variable. The individual and environmental conditions which contribute to the onset and maintenance of optimal experience are also investigated (Massimini, Csikszentmihalyi, & Delle Fave, 1988). The average quality of experience in the main daily activities, such as studying, work, family interactions, and being alone, is investigated as well. Data allow researchers to specifically identify the psychological and phenomenological components of optimal experience and to evaluate the daily opportunities for action participants perceive in their environment, the quality of experience associated with daily routine activities, and the quality of daily life from the subjective perspective.

In our research group, we usually administer Flow Questionnaire together with the Life Theme Questionnaire that provides information on participants' positive and negative life influences, present challenges, and future life goals. Life Theme Questionnaire also specifically investigates the role of family, education, and work in the promotion of individual development and well-being (Delle Fave & Massimini, 2003a, 2004b). The two questionnaires together provide information on participants' quality of life, perceived determinants of individual history, goals and expectations, skill cultivation through selective allocation of psychic resources on optimal activities, and personal growth trajectories.

The quality of experience during free time activities can also be explored through online procedures such as the *Experience Sampling Method* (ESM). This procedure was developed by Csikszentmihalyi, Larson, and Prescott (1977). It investigates contextual and experiential aspects of daily life through online repeated self-reports that participants fill out during the real unfolding of daily events and situations. ESM therefore allows researchers to investigate subjective experience overcoming the problems related to the retrospective collection of information, such as distortions and rationalizations (Hektner, Schmidt, & Csikszentmihalyi, 2007; Larson & Delespaul, 1992). During a standard ESM session, participants carry for 1 week an electronic device sending random signals 6–8 times a day from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. They are asked to fill out a form at each signal reception. Questionnaires comprise open-ended as well as scaled questions. The former investigate the external context (activity, location, and companionship), the content of thought, as well as the desired

activities, places, and social interactions, if any. The quality of experience is assessed through Likert-type scales measuring the level of affective, cognitive, and motivational variables. Additional information is gathered about participants' evaluations of the level of personal satisfaction, short- and long-term importance of the activity, opportunities for action perceived in the situation (challenges), and personal abilities (skills) in facing such opportunities.

ESM data analyses can focus on the time budget (daily distribution of activities, locations, social contexts) and on the fluctuations of experience according to activities and social context. Data can also be used to draw inter- and intragroup comparisons, as well as longitudinal and cross-cultural investigations (Delle Fave & Massimini, 2004c, 2005a). In particular, since self-reports are repeatedly filled out, numeric values of each variable are transformed into *z*-scores before analysis, starting from the individual statistics for each participants. Thanks to the features of the ESM data, a model of analysis has been developed (Experience Fluctuation Model, EFM) that allowed researchers to investigate the relation between the perception of challenges and skills and the quality of experience (Massimini, Csikszentmihalyi, & Carli, 1987). The model, used in a broad range of studies, is built on the Cartesian plane and is divided into eight sectors called channels, in which channels 1, 3, 5, and 7 are centered upon the two main axes, starting from 90° and then proceeding clockwise; the others are positioned on the bisectors of the four right angles. Each channel corresponds to a particular ratio between the standardized values of challenges on the *y*-axis and those of skills on the *x*-axis. EFM allowed for the identification of a relation between the values of challenges and skills and the quality of experience. Across samples, a recurrent association emerged between specific experiential patterns and channels. In particular, when challenges and skills are perceived above mean (channel 2), optimal experience is reported. When challenges are above average and skills below it (channel 8), participants describe a state of anxiety. The perception of challenges below and skills above average (channel 4) corresponds to a state of relaxation. Finally, when the values of challenges and skills are perceived below average (channel 6), a state of apathy is reported.

Leisure and Optimal Experience: International Findings

We will start our brief overview on flow in leisure by showing general findings gathered through Flow Questionnaire and Life Theme Questionnaire in different cultures, among 870 adults and 248 adolescents. The adult group comprised 379 women and 491 men aged 15–78. Among them, 40.7% belonged to non-Western cultures (India, Indonesia, Thailand, Philippines, Iran, Somalia, West and North Africa, Navajos, and Rom Gypsies), while 59.3% were Westerners (most of them from Italy). Participants represented a broad range of traditional and modern occupations, including farming, handicrafts, factory and office work, domestic tasks, nursing, teaching, and attending college. The adolescent group included 164 girls

Table 6.1 Percentage distribution across life domains of the optimal activities identified by adults and adolescents from various cultures

	Adults		Adolescents	
Categories	Optimal activities (%)	Selected optimal activities (%)	Optimal activities (%)	Selected optimal activities (%)
Productive activities	37.3	41.3	35.4	35.5
Leisure	45.0	42.3	43.8	44.2
Interactions	11.3	10.5	12.7	13.9
Introspection	6.5	6.0	8.1	6.4
N answers	1,604	736[a]	322	172[a]

[a]In the Flow Questionnaire, participants were invited to select, among their previously listed optimal activities, the one associated with the most pervasive flow experience. Therefore, *N* and percentages of participants and *N* and percentages of answers coincide

and 84 boys from Uganda, Nepal, Italy, and the Navajo Nation, all of them attending high school (Delle Fave et al., 2010).

A global overview of the international findings obtained through the Flow Questionnaire can help us identify some general trends as well as some cultural peculiarities. First of all, the majority of participants in both the adult and adolescent samples (84.6 and 69.4% respectively) reported optimal experience in their lives and associated it with one or more activities. As reported in Table 6.1, leisure (sport, hobbies, reading, relaxed leisure, and the use of media) and productive activities (work and study) largely predominated, both as activities overall associated with optimal experience and as activities specifically selected by the participants in relation to the most pervasive flow conditions.

This finding was recurrent across cultures, genders, and age groups, with no significant differences. However, some significant cultural differences were detected in the distribution of the selected optimal activities. In particular, free time activities were reported by a higher percentage of Western adult participants, while introspection (thinking, daydreaming, reflecting) was quoted by a higher percentage of non-Westerners. As regards adolescents, among Navajo and Italian adolescents, leisure prevailed as the most frequent opportunity for optimal experience, both within the general flow activity distribution and among the selected activities. On the contrary, Ugandan and Nepalese adolescents prominently quoted study in both cases. The participants' percentage distribution also differed across groups as regards introspection, more frequently reported by Ugandan and Nepalese adolescents than by Italian and Navajo ones. Statistical details on these differences can be found in Delle Fave et al. (2010).

We will now specifically focus on free time activities. Among the adult participants who selected them as opportunities for the most pervasive optimal experiences, over half quoted sports and hobbies, which are classified as structured or active leisure (Kleiber et al., 1986). In particular, 28.7% of these participants referred to sports and physical exercise, and 25.6% to arts, creative hobbies, and

games. Reading books and journals was selected by 28.8% of the participants, and more passive and relaxing activities such as resting, lying on the beach, enjoying holidays, going for a stroll, and listening to music by 10.7%. Only 20 participants (16 of them Westerners) selected watching TV, and only two Westerners quoted shopping and buying objects as opportunities for optimal experience (Delle Fave, Massimini, & Bassi, 2011), supporting the evidence that pursuing and achieving material goods do not foster per se well-being and optimal states (Kasser & Ryan, 1996).

Analogous findings were detected among adolescents who selected free time activities as opportunities for pervasive flow. Structured leisure largely predominated, recruiting the answers of 70.4% of the participants; sport was quoted by 49.3% of the teenagers, and arts, hobbies, and games by 21.2% of them. Reading was reported by 25.4% of the participants. Only three adolescents selected unstructured leisure activities, and only one watching TV.

In the Flow Questionnaire, participants were subsequently invited to rate on 0–8 Likert-type scales the quality of experience associated with the selected optimal activities. This allows us for a more fine-grained investigation of selected leisure activities through the exploration of the features of flow during their performance and according to their structure.

Tables 6.2 and 6.3 show the psychological features of flow during the selected free time activities. Very few cross-cultural differences were detected in these features and only at a general level of analysis, namely, looking at the whole set of leisure activities regardless of their structured or unstructured nature. At this level, non-Western participants reported significant higher values of enjoyment ($Z = 3.1$, $p < .01$), concentration ($Z = 3.4$, $p < .001$), and control of the situation ($Z = 3.5$, $p < .001$). No cultural differences were detected in the features of flow within the subcategories of leisure activities (namely, structured vs. unstructured ones). Instead, differences were detected within the group of adult participants when flow was compared across typologies of leisure activities. Due to the low number of adolescents who associated optimal experience with relaxed leisure, this activity category was dropped from the analysis for this group of participants. In the adult sample, the distinction between structured and relaxed leisure was reflected in the features of the associated optimal experience. A nonparametric ANOVA comparison across activities with post hoc Scheffé test detected significant differences for several variables. The values of perceived challenges, skills, and enjoyment were significantly higher in sports and hobbies, which represent structured leisure ($F = 11.4, p < .0001$, $F = 4.6, p < .01$, and $F = 7.9, p < .0001$ respectively). Involvement scored highest during hobbies ($F = 5.3$, $p < .01$). According to the associated activities, the twofold role of leisure – as an opportunity for enjoyable engagement or for pleasant relaxation – clearly emerges from these findings. This evidence was confirmed among in both Western and non-Western participants, and it is consistent with the wide variety of data gathered in several studies to investigate optimal experience in leisure activities (Delle Fave & Bassi, 2003; Delle Fave & Massimini, 2004a, 2005a).

Table 6.2 The psychological features of optimal experience across leisure activities among adult participants from different cultures

	Sport	Hobbies	Reading	Relaxed leisure
	(*N* = 88)	(*N* = 79)	(*N* = 89)	(*N* = 33)
Variables	*M (sd)*	*M (sd)*	*M (sd)*	*M (sd)*
Involvement	6.6 (1.6)	7.4 (1.1)	6.6 (1.9)	6.7 (1.6)
Clear feedback	6.5 (1.5)	6.9 (2.0)	6.7 (1.8)	6.5 (2.2)
Wish doing the activity	7.3 (1.5)	7.4 (1.2)	7.4 (1.2)	7.2 (2.2)
Excitement	7.8 (0.6)	7.8 (0.6)	7.6 (0.8)	7.8 (0.8)
Enjoyment	7.4 (1.0)	7.6 (1.0)	6.6 (1.8)	6.9 (1.4)
Concentration	6.2 (2.0)	6.7 (2.1)	6.5 (1.8)	6.4 (2.2)
Relaxation	6.5 (2.2)	6.9 (1.9)	6.8 (2.0)	7.6 (1.2)
Clear goals	6.8 (1.7)	7.0 (1.8)	6.9 (1.9)	6.4 (2.6)
Control of situation	6.6 (1.6)	7.0 (1.8)	6.8 (1.7)	6.6 (2.2)
Challenges	6.7 (1.5)	6.8 (1.8)	5.3 (2.3)	5.7 (2.3)
Skills	6.4 (1.6)	7.0 (1.1)	6.1 (1.9)	6.0 (2.3)

N number of participants

Table 6.3 The psychological features of optimal experience across leisure activities among adolescents from different cultures

	Sport	Hobbies	Reading
	(*N* = 35)	(*N* = 15)	(*N* = 18)
Variables	*M (sd)*	*M (sd)*	*M (sd)*
Involvement	7.2 (1.5)	8.0 (0.0)	6.9 (1.3)
Clear feedback	6.5 (1.7)	6.7 (1.2)	5.4 (2.4)
Wish doing the activity	6.4 (2.2)	7.3 (1.4)	6.4 (2.2)
Excitement	6.8 (2.2)	7.1 (2.0)	7.1 (1.6)
Enjoyment	7.3 (1.2)	7.7 (1.0)	6.8 (2.1)
Concentration	5.5 (2.5)	6.9 (1.4)	5.9 (1.6)
Relaxation	4.8 (2.9)	5.5 (3.4)	4.1 (2.7)
Clear goals	6.3 (2.3)	7.3 (1.2)	6.8 (1.6)
Control of situation	6.9 (1.8)	6.9 (1.2)	6.0 (2.1)
Challenges	6.7 (2.1)	6.2 (2.8)	4.7 (2.5)
Skills	7.1 (1.8)	7.1 (1.4)	6.2 (1.7)

N number of participants

The Interplay Between Leisure and Work

According to Rojek (1995), the prominence of homo faber on homo ludens in Western societies entails the risk of considering leisure as either a source of compensation "replenishing the stultified energies of the worker" (p. 190) or a segregated domain centered on absolute freedom and choice. Both these approaches

Table 6.4 Leisure as selected optimal activity across professions

	Nurses	Craftsmen	White-collar workers	Cashiers
Categories	(*N*=30) (%)	(*N*=68) (%)	(*N*=50) (%)	(*N*=55) (%)
Productive activities	52.2	59.1	38	18.2
Leisure	24.8	36.4	54	74.5
Interactions	17.1	1.5	2	1.8
Introspection	5.9	3.0	6	5.4
Group *N*[a]	30	78	66	60
% Flow[b]	96.7	87.2	75.8	91.7

[a]Overall sample sizes
[b]Percentage of participants reporting optimal experience in their lives

generate unrealistic expectations of psychological fulfillment through leisure, in that leisure itself is a socially constructed domain, with its own rules, contents, and constraints. Parker (1997) proposed a broader approach, maintaining that the relationship between work and leisure is not homogeneous within a given society, but it depends on people's occupation. On this basis, he identified three patterns of work-leisure relationship. The *extension* pattern is typical of people involved in creative and autonomy-supporting jobs, and it derives from the spillover approach that posits mutual influences in terms of skill development and levels of satisfaction between different areas of life (Leiter & Durup, 1996; Staines, 1980). The *opposition* pattern applies to people enrolled in risky and damaging jobs, who compensate through leisure the frustrations and constraints of work. Finally, the *separation* pattern applies to the workers employed in neither particularly creative nor dangerous jobs, who perceive work and leisure as two independent life domains, with no mutual influences.

A confirmation of Parker's approach and of its impact on optimal activities has been highlighted among four different groups of workers. Results are shown in Table 6.4. In all groups, the majority of participants reported optimal experience in their lives. However, nurses and craftsman, who were involved in work activities offering opportunities for autonomy, creativity, and skill development, prominently associated flow with their job, thus supporting the extension pattern of work-leisure relationship. On the opposite, cashiers and blue-collar workers, employed in repetitive and low-challenge tasks, showed the prominence of the separation pattern: They mostly reported flow in leisure activities which were completely unrelated to their jobs.

A clear evidence of the extension pattern was detected in a study on optimal experience conducted among physicians and teachers, two categories of workers involved in highly challenging jobs, both at the technical and relational levels, and characterized by a great social relevance (Delle Fave & Massimini, 2003a). Eighty percent of the physicians and all the teachers reported optimal experiences in their lives. Among physicians, work ranked first, followed by sports, hobbies, and the use of media (which prominently comprised reading and listening to music).

The activity most frequent quoted by teachers was reading, followed by hobbies (painting, drawing, creative writing, playing music), teaching, practicing sports, listening to music, and studying. Teachers' findings suggest that knowledge acquisition and exchange was an integral part of these participants' psychological selection, a means for pursuing personal development and growth in complexity at the psychological level. Besides work, they reported to preferentially devote their attention to activities allowing them to cultivate intellectual sources of enjoyment and provide them with the opportunity to transmit interest in knowledge to their pupils. Concerning selected optimal activities, leisure (including both structured and relaxed activities) was reported by 29.2% of the physicians and 21.3% of the teachers, with sport and hobbies accounting for 71 and 76% of the answers respectively. The use of media was reported by 14.6% of the physicians and 36.3% of the teachers. It mostly referred to reading books (86 and 83% of the answers respectively).

The psychological features of optimal experience were substantially overlapping in the work and leisure domains. Only one significant variation was detected in each sample. Physicians associated work with significantly lower values of relaxation than leisure, while teachers perceived significantly higher challenges in work than in leisure ($t = 2.8$, $p < .01$).

Engagement and Skill Development Among Sport Amateurs

As previously outlined, optimal experience has been widely investigated in both sport professionals and amateurs. Susan Jackson and her colleagues provided extensive evidence of the positive role of flow in promoting performance and skill development among professionals (Jackson & Csikszentmihalyi, 1999; Jackson & Kimiecik, 2008; Jackson, Thomas, Marsh, & Smethurst, 2001). In the last two decades, several researchers have devoted their attention to the investigation of optimal experience among amateurs engaged in a wide range of sport activities (an overview of these studies is provided in Delle Fave et al., 2010).

In this section we will briefly refer to data gathered among amateur climbers in a peculiar condition, namely, an expedition on the Himalaya. Climbers' experience was thoroughly investigated in Csikszentmihalyi's early work (1975) through semi-structured interviews, and findings proved relevant in describing flow characteristics. In our study, six climbers repeatedly filled out ESM forms throughout the expedition, thus providing online self-reports of their experience fluctuations (Bassi & Delle Fave, 2010; Delle Fave et al., 2003a). In line with Csikszentmihalyi's findings, flow was the experience recurring most frequently during the expedition and, above all, during camp and climbing activities. The expedition presented structural characteristics that allowed for flow onset, in that high-altitude activities depend on the skills of the climber, and most of them offer challenges that are functional to practical outcomes, ultimately including personal survival (Ewert, 1994).

The climbers described the activities associated with optimal experience as highly engaging and simultaneously perceived competence in the task at hand.

Climbers chose to take part in the expedition mainly because they wanted to. In spite of the objective physical danger and of a severe weather emergency which occurred during the climbing period, participants joined the project till the end. This persistence was not related to any external material reward; rather, climbers received unique rewards intrinsic to the activity (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975).

Moreover, although bad weather conditions substantially undermined the expedition outcome and represented a risk for survival, the occurrence of experiences of anxiety among climbers was extremely low. In line with numerous studies (Benzi & Tamorri, 1988; Robinson, 1985), anxiety control was functional to survival in risky sports: If climbers are not able to master anxiety, they can lose control of the situation, fall into a crevice, or be unable to fully exploit their physical potential. Moreover, according to the dynamic development process intrinsic to optimal experience, the more the climbers faced expedition challenges, the more they sharpened their skills and subsequently looked for more complex challenges (Massimini & Delle Fave, 2000). Participants actually seemed to be susceptible to variations in challenges differently from other samples, for example, students (Delle Fave et al., 2003a). They described a globally negative experience in low-challenge conditions and a globally engaging and positive experience in situations characterized by the imbalance between high challenges and low personal skills. These findings were consistent with studies on climbers' personality, showing their boredom susceptibility and sensation seeking (Aşçi, Demirhan, & Dinç, 2007; Breivik, 1996; Egan & Stelmack, 2003).

These results highlight the pivotal role of challenge perception in promoting optimal experience in sports and – more broadly – in structured leisure. At the same time, they highlight the importance of training amateurs to match their skills with appropriate activity settings and adequate opportunities for action, avoiding unnecessary exposure to risk. Considering the growing abuse of physical exercise and its negative health outcomes, especially evident among inadequately trained people having a sedentary lifestyle, these aspects become of paramount importance for the promotion of well-being through leisure.

Complexity of Leisure and Adolescents' Development

Leisure activities represent an important part of Western adolescents' daily life. Despite school commitment, an increasing amount of free time has become available to the youth in the postindustrial world. Enjoying increasing freedom from adult controls, adolescents can discover the pleasure of self-regulated social experiences instead of facing the pressure of being socialized (Olivier, 2000). However, youth often misuse their free time in unstructured activities, providing not only short-term pleasure but also lack of meaning and disengagement (Larson, 2000; Verma & Larson, 2003).

Several studies have highlighted the paramount relevance of family, as the primary socialization environment, in promoting teenagers' skill development and engagement in serious leisure (Rathunde, 2001; Steca, Bassi, Caprara, & Delle Fave, 2011). In particular, the impact of family models on opportunities for flow in leisure during adolescence clearly emerged in a study comparing girls living in institutions because of severe family problems with girls living in intact families (Delle Fave & Massimini, 2000).

The administration of Flow Questionnaire to these adolescents highlighted some basic differences between the two groups regarding the complexity of the activities associated with optimal experience. Sports and hobbies were the most frequent category reported by the girls living at home (30% of the answers), followed by studying (18.6%), reading and interacting with peers (both with 15.7% of the answers), and listening to music (12.9%). The institutionalized adolescents reported socialization and peer interaction as the main sources of optimal experience (38.4% of the answers), followed by watching TV and listening to music (23.1%), and by sports and hobbies (12.8%).

The prominence of interactions with peers as occasions for optimal experience reported by girls living in institutions is a quite uncommon result in the studies on this topic. Cross-cultural research showed the two-sided effect of peer interactions on adolescents' quality of experience (Verma & Larson, 2003). Spending free time with peers provides fun, positive affect, and pleasure; it fosters the development of social competences, but it is often associated with low mobilization of personal skills. Our findings highlighted the relevance these relationships take on for adolescents deprived of stable family interactions. Peers played the role of advisors and models in the development of institutionalized girls, providing them with behavioral instructions, values, goals, and a meaning-making system not necessarily suited to the challenges and features of the adult life.

Moreover, besides socializing, the leisure activities quoted by the girls living in institution were characterized by a short-term relevance and a low level of complexity. These activities neither fostered the cultivation of specific skills nor the participants' integration in the cultural environment. They rather provided the adolescents with a way to escape a low-challenge and problematic context. For example, some of the institutionalized girls associated TV with optimal experience, while no girl living at home did. Several other studies (Kubey & Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Massimini, Delle Fave, & Borri Gaspardin, 1992) showed that watching TV is mainly associated with passiveness, disengagement, and low levels of affect and involvement. This result is therefore a marker of the low level and amount of challenges girls in institutions were exposed to in their daily environment. On the contrary, girls living at home associated optimal experience with both intellectually and physically creative and demanding activities. Sports, arts, learning, and reading share the common feature of a complex structure. Individuals can always find new and increasingly challenging opportunities for action in performing them, and they can subsequently improve related skills. This dynamic process toward complexity is a source of intrinsic reward by itself (Delle Fave & Massimini, 2005a). At the same time, the involvement in these tasks ensures lifelong advantages in terms of individual development and social and professional integration.

Optimal Experience, Leisure, and Psychological Selection

Despite its potential in fostering development and a good quality of life, optimal experience shows an amoral character (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2009). It does not automatically bring about well-being and development; rather, its outcomes vary according to the features of the associated activities and their role within the value system of the individuals and of their social environment (Delle Fave, 2009).

As previously stated, optimal experience is a core component of the long-term process of psychological selection. However, the replication of flow activities alone does not guarantee positive consequences for the individual or society. More specifically, research has shown that people can associate flow with free time behaviors that can have a damaging impact on the self or others, such as gambling (Wanner, Ladouceur, Auclair, & Vitaro, 2006), drug abuse (Delle Fave & Massimini, 2003b), stealing (Delle Fave, Bassi, & Massimini, 2003b), graffiti spraying (Rheinberg & Manig, 2003), addiction to Internet games (Chou & Ting, 2003), computer hacking (Voiskounsky & Smyslova, 2003), and pathological online shopping (Bridges & Florsheim, 2008). Therefore, other components have to be taken into account within psychological selection, such as meaning making (Singer, 2004) and the pursuit of self-actualization through activities that are not necessarily rewarding in the short term.

The interpretation of reality through the attribution of meanings to environmental and personal situations is a peculiar feature of human beings and communities (Emmons, 2005; Jablonka & Lamb, 2005). Within the framework of psychological selection, and taking into account the dimension of meaning, optimal experience can be considered both an antecedent and an outcome. Due to the psychological rewards provided by this condition, the associated activities will be preferentially replicated and cultivated in the long term, thus affecting both the developmental trajectory of the individuals – their psychological selection pattern – and their level of social integration and participation. On the other hand, through the dynamic features of the meaning-making process and the ceaseless interaction with the environment, activities previously ignored by the individual can become opportunities for optimal experience, sources of new meanings, or both (Delle Fave, 2009), and the amoral aspect of flow can be counterbalanced by individual and social resources that can intervene in steering behavior toward more constructive opportunities for action.

The long-term impact of leisure activities on psychological selection can be explored through the joint analysis of findings derived from Flow Questionnaire and Life Theme Questionnaire. More specifically, it is possible to detect whether a specific life domain or activity category (e.g., leisure) is recurrent within each participant's answers as an opportunity for flow in the Flow Questionnaire, and – at the same time – as a present challenge and a future goal in the Life Theme Questionnaire. We have labeled this recurrence as *congruence* of a domain with the process of psychological selection. This topic was investigated in the findings provided by the

Table 6.5 Percentage of adult and adolescent participants from different cultures identifying the same activity category as a flow-related activity, a present challenge, as well as a future goal in their answers to the Flow Questionnaire and the Life Theme Questionnaire

	Recurrence as flow activity/challenge/goal	
Activity categories	Adults	Adolescents
Productive activities	10.5	32.6
Relations	2.0	1.6
Leisure	–	–

international adult and adolescent samples described in the previous pages (Delle Fave et al., 2010). As shown in Table 6.5, congruence was detected for a limited percentage of participants in both the adult and adolescent groups as regards productive activities and relations, while none of the participants' congruence was found in relation to the domain of leisure.

Consistent with these results were the findings derived from a different international research project, the Eudaimonic and Hedonic Happiness Investigation (EHHI; Delle Fave, Brdar, Freire, Vella-Brodrick, & Wissing, 2010). This project aimed at investigating perceived happiness and meaningfulness in different life domains among adult participants from seven different Western countries. Thanks to the mixed method approach used in the study, it was possible to evaluate the role participants attributed to the major life domains through both spontaneous answers to open-ended questions and through rating scales. Leisure ranked last in frequency of answers among the ten life domains quoted by participants when asked to define happiness in their own words, and it ranked eighth in answer frequency among the 11 domains participants freely quoted as the most meaningful ones in their lives. Similar findings were obtained in the ratings on 7-point scales participants provided of their perceived levels of happiness and meaningfulness in the main life domains. In particular, leisure ranked sixth in average values of happiness and meaningfulness out of the ten life domains evaluated through the scales.

Both the findings on congruence, derived from the Flow Questionnaire and the Life Theme Questionnaire, and the evidence obtained through the EHHI point to a specific feature of leisure, from the perspective of psychological selection. Compared with other life domains, leisure shows a higher potential for providing positive and gratifying experiences in the short term, but at the same time, it is not perceived as a relevant source of meaning and long-term investment. This feature was detected across cultures, age groups, and genders, and it held true of both structured and unstructured leisure.

Based on these findings, we could be tempted to conclude that people generally perceive leisure as meaningless fun and that they merely practice it to pursue short-term well-being and to enjoyably occupy the free time left by daily duties and commitments. Nevertheless, a huge bulk of literature can easily disconfirm this statement, in particular referring to structured activities promoting the development of competences and complexity at the psychological and behavioral levels. Nevertheless, the empirical

evidence of a disconnection between leisure and long-term goals and meanings requires attention from the theoretical, social, and interventional perspectives, and it calls for an effort to redefine leisure and its psychological and developmental roles.

Broadening Perspectives

In the light of the findings presented in this chapter, and in line with other studies (Kleiber, 2004), at the theoretical level it could be useful to define leisure more broadly in order to identify true growth opportunities in it. Meaningful activities such as good acts (e.g., volunteering, community service, socially useful activities) or good habits (e.g., regular exercise, various kinds of physical and mental trainings) can be considered leisure activities regardless of their short-term gratification (Delle Fave & Massimini, 2005b; Peterson, Park, & Sweeney, 2008). There are several meaningful pathways conducive to enjoyment in leisure and at the same time to personal growth in competences and behavior complexity (Delle Fave, 2009; Smith, Christopher, Delle Fave, & Bhawuk, 2002).

From a cultural perspective, the findings discussed in the previous pages highlighted the prominence of leisure as optimal activity among Western participants, compared with the prominence of introspection and free thinking among non-Westerners. This raises a crucial issue. Western societies presently emphasize performance more than experience, quantification of time and activities more than their quality. This is true of all life domains, including leisure. However, looking back at the Western history, the Latin term *otium*, rooted in the Aristotelian idea of *scholé*, was originally meant as an opportunity for self-cultivation and innovation (André, 1966). Ancient Greek and Roman societies considered daily duties and occupations as negatively juxtaposed to this optimal condition, labeling them as *ascholia* and *negotium*, respectively. Both Cicero and Seneca stressed the importance of finding a balance between contemplation and action in daily life. This approach was gradually replaced by a negative conceptualization of otium as idling, sloth, and meaningless inaction. Nevertheless, even though investing free time in structured activities helps avoid the consequences of apathy and time misuse, individuals should also actively discover the developmental resources of unstructured activities, such as reflecting, merging with the environment, observing reality and oneself, developing awareness of the present moment, and engaging in free, creative thoughts.

The lack of this training is evident in most studies conducted with ESM to explore the quality of daily experience. When finding themselves in an unstructured situation, individuals of any age most often report being uncomfortable and unable to tolerate such a condition of emptiness. The prominent strategy to escape this discomfort is to search for passive attention fillers, such as TV and online games (Delle Fave & Massimini, 2005a). An alternative and developmentally relevant strategy, however, is represented by the appreciation and exploration of the potential for creativity and autonomy characterizing unstructured activities, as opportunities for

discovering new resources and self-determined motives, and for finding new meanings.

In particular, this aspect should be taken into account in the design of intervention programs in postindustrial countries, especially concerning children's and adolescents' education to manage free time. When lacking the support of material or virtual artifacts, Western youth are increasingly unable to structure their attention and to autonomously identify and generate opportunities for engagement and development. This psychological dependence on artifacts and externally structured environments is one of the heaviest tributes we are paying to material affluence and modernization.

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Part III
Leisure, Well-Being and Quality of Life

Chapter 7
Facilitating Change Through Leisure: The Leisure and Well-Being Model of Therapeutic Recreation Practice

Colleen D. Hood and Cynthia P. Carruthers

Research on the relationship between leisure and well-being has been underrepresented in the positive science literature (Caldwell, 2005). And yet, what domain of life has the potential to contribute more to well-being? Leisure is vast. In leisure, a person can climb a mountain, sail a sea, write a poem, volunteer at a soup kitchen, read to a child, or watch a sunset. Leisure, wisely chosen, has the potential to enrich a life beyond measure. Yet oftentimes, people do not appreciate the value of leisure in creating a life of meaning nor do they have the knowledge or skills necessary to reap the greatest benefit from leisure. The primary purpose of therapeutic recreation (TR), a profession within the broader discipline of leisure studies, is to help individuals, especially those with disabilities or illnesses, cultivate well-being through leisure. Specifically, therapeutic recreation professionals facilitate individuals' ability to engage in leisure to address the challenges associated with having a disability or illness while simultaneously supporting the development of capacities needed to increase positive emotion and to build a life of personal growth and meaning.

Leisure is a frequently overlooked life space in both research and health promotion efforts, yet "it is estimated that people spend a significant portion of their life engaged in leisure activities and this fact highlights the centrality of leisure within daily life" (Lloyd, King, McCarthy, & Scanlan, 2007, p. 33). In no other context of life are people as free to choose the nature of their engagement, and this ability to choose leisure experiences gives rise to the potential of leisure to either support or compromise well-being. Of course, people do not always choose their leisure

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wisely. Some forms of leisure can be detrimental to well-being (i.e., substance misuse) or have little to no effect on well-being (i.e., mindlessly watching TV). However, leisure choices and practices that are physically, socially, cognitively, or emotionally engaging can directly enhance well-being. The essential defining qualities of leisure create a natural link between leisure and well-being. Leisure experiences are those engagements that are (1) pleasant in anticipation, experience, or recollection; (2) pursued for the intrinsic rewards inherent in the activity; (3) perceived as chosen in relative freedom; (4) expressive of essential aspects of the self; and (5) experienced in contrast to whatever is going on before or after and thus often involves a shift in perception and/or engagement. Leisure is not defined by activity alone (e.g., gardening may be leisure to one person and obligated labor to another); it is truly individual and dependent on the perception of the person involved (Kleiber, 1999).

Positive leisure experience can support the development of well-being in several important ways. First, leisure has been shown to be an important mechanism for coping with stress and thus can support the reduction of distress in daily life (Iwasaki, 2007). Second, leisure experiences are an important source of positive emotion (Davidson, Shahar, Lawless, Sells, & Tondora, 2006; Iwasaki, 2007, 2008). These positive emotions can be generated through meaningful engagements, the satisfaction arising from success in personally chosen pursuits, and/or from the excitement associated with taking chances, undertaking challenge, or seeking novel experiences. Third, leisure can support the development and expression of personal strengths in that people often select leisure experiences that allow for the expression and cultivation of talents, interests, and capacities (Dik & Hansen, 2008; Iwasaki, 2007, 2008). Leisure experience can set the stage for flow to occur and thus create a positive spiral of skills development and challenge in personally meaningful activities (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). Fourth, leisure experiences are often social in nature and create a shared experience that supports the development of friendships and social connections (Coleman & Iso-Ahola, 1993). Finally, leisure experience can create opportunities to use capacities in the service of something larger than the self, supporting the development of a meaningful life (Stebbins, 2008).

Leisure is a domain characterized by relative freedom, self-expression, and enjoyment (Kleiber, 1999) making it an ideal context in which to craft a life of well-being (Carruthers & Hood, 2007; Hood & Carruthers, 2007). Recently, a new service delivery model for therapeutic recreation, the Leisure and Well-Being Model (LWM) (Carruthers & Hood, 2007; Hood & Carruthers, 2007), was developed. Based on literature from positive psychology, leisure studies, social work, youth development, and other areas, the model advanced a framework through which professionals can help people engage in leisure in the most beneficial way possible and use their capacities to create a life of meaning and purpose. This chapter will introduce readers to the LWM and will provide the research evidence to support the use of leisure-based interventions to enhance well-being.

Premises of the Leisure and Well-Being Model

The Leisure and Well-Being Model (LWM) is based on three major premises: (1) the importance of focusing interventions on individuals' strengths rather than primarily on limitations; (2) the centrality of positive emotion in creating a life of meaning; and (3) the key role of leisure experiences in creating positive emotion and cultivating resources, strengths, and capacities. A focus on strengths and positive emotions leads to the development of social agency, according to Davidson and colleagues (2006). They suggested that social agency occurs when people view themselves as being "capable of choosing, initiating, doing and accomplishing things in the world one inhabits" (p. 157). According to these researchers, social agency occurs as a result of involvement in pleasurable life events, leading to hope and the use or development of competencies. These competencies may then translate into success in the pursuit of meaningful goals, resulting in more positive emotion and ultimately in a changed sense of self (Davidson et al.).

The Leisure and Well-Being Model (see Fig. 7.1) describes two mechanisms through which therapeutic recreation can facilitate the well-being of clients: (a) increasing the value of leisure in building resources, creating positive emotion, and cultivating one's potential and (b) providing psychoeducational interventions that promote resource development and well-being. Through these dual mechanisms, therapeutic recreation specialists help clients construct a life of ongoing personal development and contribution to the world.

Enhancing Leisure

A significant focus of the Leisure and Well-Being Model is the nature and quality of the leisure experience. Leisure experiences may play a role in supporting the experience of positive emotion and in the development of resources; however, not all leisure experiences are supportive of these outcomes. Hood and Carruthers (2007) suggested that an emphasis on "doing" leisure may not be enough to facilitate well-being. It is the emphasis on both the "doing" of leisure and the "quality" of the experience of leisure that supports the development of resources and well-being. As such, the LWM identifies five ways that therapeutic recreation specialists can assist clients in the cultivation and enhancement of their leisure experiences as a means to maximize the value of those experiences in supporting well-being. The five approaches are savoring leisure, mindful leisure, leisure gratifications, authentic leisure, and virtuous leisure.

Leisure experiences are considered to be an important source of positive emotion; however, according to Veenhoven (2008), "learning to enjoy" experience is an important capacity related to well-being; thus, the LWM incorporates a focus on savoring leisure. Savoring leisure includes strategies related to learning

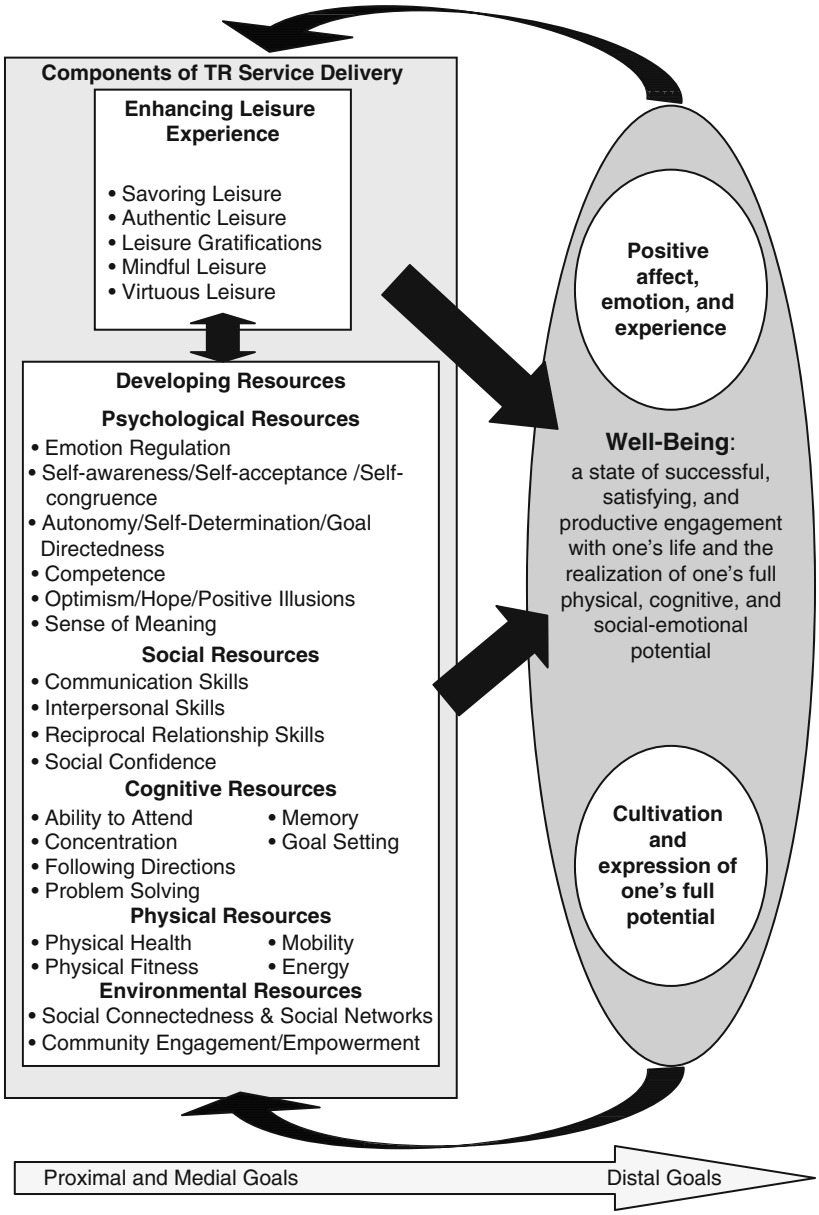

Fig. 7.1 Components of the leisure and well-being model

to pay attention to positive aspects and emotions related to leisure involvement and purposefully seeking leisure experiences that give rise to positive emotions. Being fully present in a leisure experience is also necessary in order to reap the many benefits possible of leisure engagement and is directly linked to positive

emotion and well-being. Mindful leisure focuses attention on strategies for increasing mindfulness within leisure (i.e., disengaging from automatic thoughts) and on strategies related to using leisure to increase mindfulness (i.e., yoga, nature, meditation). Leisure experience can also be an important arena for the development of skills and capacities, and leisure gratifications focus on the choice and modification of leisure activities that allow for skill development, full engagement, sustained involvement, and the experience of flow. The discretionary nature of leisure makes it an ideal context for the exploration and expression of essential aspects of the self, and this focus on identity development and expression is incorporated in authentic leisure. Finally, according to Seligman (2002), an important path to well-being is finding ways to be of service to others or the world. Virtuous leisure incorporates the notion of finding avenues through which to use one's strengths and capacities in service to others through leisure engagements such as volunteerism.

Leisure experiences that are savored, mindful, develop one's capacities and strengths, reflect one's authentic self, and contribute to something greater than themselves are most likely to positively impact well-being (Hood & Carruthers, 2007). Additionally, activities make different contributions to one's well-being based on the individual. Sheldon and Lyubomirsky (2004) stated that "not all activities will help a particular person become happier. People have enduring strengths, interests, values, and inclinations, which predispose them to benefit more from some activities than others" (p. 138). Consequently, the selection of activities that are in accordance with one's strengths, capacities, interests, and goals becomes an important strategy for increasing positive emotion and developing resources and well-being.

Developing Resources

One important dimension of well-being identified in the literature relates to the experience of personal growth, self-actualization, and becoming fully functional (Carruthers & Hood, 2004; Fava & Ruini, 2003; Ryff & Singer, 1998; Seligman, 2002); in other words, the cultivation of one's full potential. This evolution of self occurs through a process of ongoing self-discovery, cultivation of personal strengths, creation of contexts that support development, and finding meaning in life (Fava & Ruini). The Leisure and Well-Being Model directly links positive leisure experiences to the cultivation of strengths or resources that support well-being. Moreover, the literature related to well-being clearly indicates that capacities and contexts that support well-being can be cultivated intentionally and should be an important outcome facilitated by health and human service professions (Joseph & Linley, 2006).

The term "resources" refers to the internal and external assets, strengths, and contexts upon which one can draw in times of need, as well as to create a satisfying, enjoyable, and productive life (Hobfoll, 2002; Martin, 2002). Resources are qualities, attributes, or contexts that have positive value, either in their own right or as a means

to obtain other valued assets (Hobfoll). However, assets, strengths, and contexts are only viewed as resources when they "are appraised by individuals as available for use in meeting life conditions and to maximize well-being" (Martin, p. 3). Resource development is a positive spiral, in that those with internal and environmental resources are more likely to continue to enrich their resource reservoirs and the possession of an array of resources is linked to better stress coping and problem-solving capacities (Hobfoll). This concept of resources is a foundation of the LWM and directs the focus of therapeutic recreation services to the development of internal and external resources that can be used by individuals to reduce or resolve problems and to actively create positive daily life experiences and emotion.

Resources have been connected to adjustment and adaptation. Researchers have suggested that the possession of, and ability to draw upon, a repertoire of resources facilitates adjustment and/or adaptational processes (Hobfoll, 2002; Martin, 2002). Given that many clients served by TR are in the process of adapting and adjusting to a new medical condition, a change in functional status, or environmental stressors, the development of resources must play a central role for TR professionals. For ease of discussion, the exploration of resources relevant for TR practice has been broken down into the categories of psychological, cognitive, social, physical, and environmental resources, each of which is discussed below.

Psychological Resources

Taylor, Kemeny, Reed, Bower, and Gruenewald (2000) described the contributions of psychological resources, such as optimism, personal control, and a sense of meaning, to well-being. They suggested that these resources "become especially important when people are faced with challenging or threatening events. They may act as reserves, enabling people to cope more effectively with such events" (p. 99). There are many psychological resources that can support well-being; however, only those that are linked to leisure in the research literature have been included in the LWM. They are emotion regulation, self-awareness, autonomy and self-determination, competence, optimism, and sense of meaning.

Emotion Regulation

The resource of emotion regulation is the processes that people use to influence the positive and negative emotions that they experience, their behavioral expression, and their physiological consequences (Gross, 2002). The ability to regulate emotions, in turn, affects one's subjective well-being which is characterized by frequent positive emotion, less frequent negative emotion, and high life satisfaction (Diener & Biswas-Diener, 2008). Emotion regulation does not require an antagonistic relationship with negative emotion, as suppressing negative emotion does little to reduce negative emotion, but in fact restricts positive emotion, as well as

cognitive, social, and behavior functioning (Gross, 2002). However, individuals are well served to choose, modify, and appraise situations, as well as deploy their attention, in ways that cultivate positive emotion and minimize negative emotion (Bosse, Pontier, & Treur, 2010).

Leisure is a context for the creation of positive emotion, coping with negative emotion and circumstances, and personal transformation (Iwasaki & Schneider, 2003). It contributes to positive emotion by providing opportunities for play, fun, and laughter, all of which contribute to positive emotion and personal growth (Brown & Vaughan, 2009; Davidson et al., 2006). Nature experiences can create feelings of awe, excitement, and pleasure. Listening to music can contribute to pleasure and the regulation of daily mood. Mindfulness activities, such as meditation, tai chi, and yoga can increase positive emotion and reduce distress (Carmody, Reed, Kristeller, & Merriam, 2008; Kabat-Zinn, 2003). Any optimally challenging leisure activity can produce deep feelings of enjoyment. Given that leisure is a domain of relative freedom and self-determination, it is an ideal context for pursuing activities through which people can experience stimulation, learning, and accomplishment, as well as develop and express one's passions, that is, those activities that are enjoyable and "makes people's lives most worth living" (Vallerand, 2008, p. 1).

Involvement in leisure can build strengths, capacities, and interpersonal relationships that allow people to deal with adversity (Iwasaki & Schneider, 2003). It provides a temporal break from stress that allows the shift in attention necessary to interrupt negative emotion (Iwasaki & Schneider). The positive emotion experienced in leisure can also "undo" negative emotion with its attendant grip on the mind and body (Fredrickson, 2009). Engagement in leisure is associated with lower levels of, as well as recovery from, depression (Janke, Payne, & Van Puymbroeck, 2008).

Coping with illnesses and disabilities can be particularly stressful, and leisure is important to that process. Obviously, individuals with illnesses and disabilities receive all of the emotional benefits from leisure that other people do. However, research indicates that leisure can contribute specifically to coping with disability, healing, and rejuvenation by providing a connection to the past, an escape from the "disabled" role and confined physical spaces, structure and purpose, independence and continuity of self, and mental and physical health (Hutchinson, Loy, Kleiber, & Dattilo, 2003). Post-trauma, leisure can provide opportunities to reflect upon life and serve as a context for personal transformation.

Self-Awareness

Human development and well-being involve an ongoing construction and refinement of one's sense of self or identity (Kleiber, 1999; Waterman, 1993). Self-awareness of one's personal interests, values, and strengths (Seligman, 2002), as well as self-acceptance and expression (Henry, 2006), is likely a foundation for many of the other resources that support well-being. Without knowledge of self, including awareness of strengths and limitations, building physical, psychological, social, and environmental resources becomes extremely difficult. Resources must

reflect personally meaningful goals, must provide opportunities to capitalize on personal strengths, and must augment areas of personal limitation.

Leisure involvement can play an important role in developing self-awareness in that the relative freedom associated with leisure involvement allows individuals to experiment with different activities, roles, and behaviors, thus learning about themselves (Hood, 2003). Leisure also plays an important role in the expression and affirmation of one's identity (Kleiber, 1999). Involvement in activities that are personally meaningful and a reflection of self has the potential to create a sense of personal congruence that, in turn, contributes to a sense of well-being (Sheldon & Kasser, 2001). Finally, leisure can serve as a space in one's life for rest, self-reflection, and renewal, a pause that facilitates the integration of various aspects of the self (Hutchinson et al., 2003).

Illness and disability clearly impact one's sense of self, regardless of the illness or disability (Shea, 2010). For most people who experience illness or disability, there is a loss of self associated with diagnosis and treatment. For people with physical health conditions, both acute and chronic, there is the sense that the person becomes secondary to the condition (Lawson, Delamere, & Hutchinson, 2008). For people with dementia and other cognitive limitations, there is the perception that as capacity diminishes, so too does personhood, self-awareness, and sense of identity (Caddell & Clare, 2010). For individuals diagnosed with mental illnesses, recovering a sense of self seems to be a central task of the recovery process (Carless & Douglas, 2008; Shea, 2010). Leisure involvement can play a central role in rediscovering valued aspects of self and in reconstructing a valued social identity (Carless & Douglas, 2008; Kleiber, Reel, & Hutchinson, 2008; Lawson et al., 2008); and supportive interventions designed to facilitate identity reconstruction are also an important part of creating a life of meaning and purpose (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004).

Autonomy

The resource of autonomy is a fundamental human need (Deci & Ryan, 2008). When individuals engage in activities because they find them personally meaningful and valuable or because the activity is interesting, enjoyable, or spontaneously satisfying, they are experiencing autonomous motivation; conversely, when individuals engage in activities due to externally or internally imposed pressure or coercion, they are experiencing controlled motivation (Deci & Ryan). Autonomous motivation is enhanced through activities and environments that promote personal competence, autonomy, and relatedness, all of which are associated with well-being. Research affirms that autonomous motivation is associated with both subjective and psychological well-being, as well as physical health (Deci & Ryan).

Leisure is an ideal context for exercising autonomous motivation. Individuals may go to work or school for largely extrinsic reasons; however, leisure, by its very definition, is a life domain characterized by relative freedom and the pursuit of activities that are personally satisfying (Vallerand, 2008). Coleman and Iso-Ahola (1993) proposed that leisure is a unique context in which to develop or enhance

perceptions of autonomy and self-determination. They stated that "obviously, one leisure experience does not lead to the formation of a self-determining disposition; instead, leisure experiences wherein choice and discretion are actively exercised cumulatively builds this predisposition" (p. 120). The agency or self-determination experienced in a leisure context, especially if repeatedly reinforced, can generalize into other domains of everyday life (Guay, Vallerand, & Blanchard, 2000).

The literature on disability stresses the importance of self-determination to the well-being and quality of life for people with disabilities. Self-determination refers to "both the right and capacity of individuals to exert control over and direct their lives" (Wehmeyer, 2004, p. 25). Leisure may be an especially important vehicle for developing a sense of self-determination and agency for people with disabilities, as they often experience restricted opportunities for autonomous choice and participation in other life domains (Patterson & Pegg, 2009). Leisure activities and environments that provide individuals with disabilities with an array of opportunities for choice, self-expression, supportive relationships, and personal growth promote autonomous motivation and well-being.

Competence

The resource of competence is a central human need that motivates behavior across life domains and is an important dimension of well-being (Deci & Ryan, 2008). Perceptions of competence, self-efficacy, or environmental mastery contribute to well-being in their own right, as well as provide a foundation for the development of other resources (Ryff & Singer, 2008). Individuals approach and persist in activities in which they feel competent or efficacious (Bandura, 2004). People who feel competent will be more likely to experience positive emotion, explore new opportunities and relationships, feel optimistic when faced with challenges, and feel good about themselves.

Research suggests that the self-efficacy attained through engagement and success in challenging leisure activities can support the development of specific competencies (e.g., activity skills, social skills, leadership skills), as well as generalize to other domains of life and contribute to the belief that one can respond effectively to environmental demands (Kennedy, Taylor, & Hindson, 2006). Contexts that provide opportunities for empowerment and efficacy through leisure may be especially salient for individuals with disabilities as they often are marginalized. The generalized self-efficacy and environmental mastery gained through leisure elevates individuals with disabilities' perceptions of what is possible in life (Kennedy et al.).

Optimism

Another important resource, optimism, refers to a particular cognitive explanatory style. Optimists tend to explain their life experiences in ways that result in hope about the future, perceptions of capability and control, positive emotion (Seligman, 2002),

and coping with adversity (Taylor et al., 2000). Optimism has been linked positively with many physical and mental health outcomes (Taylor et al.). Seligman suggested that learning to monitor one's explanations of life events is an important first step in becoming more optimistic. Habitual patterns of pessimistic thoughts must be identified, challenged, refuted, and replaced by more optimistic explanations.

Kleiber, Hutchinson, and Williams (2002) proposed that one of the functions of leisure in coping with negative life events is the generation of optimism about the future. The expectation of a pleasant experience in leisure is a form of optimism that, once experienced, may give rise to optimism in other life domains. Moreover, experiencing pleasure and success in leisure leads to a renewed sense of self and capability, also potentially leading to increased optimism about the future (Hutchinson et al., 2003; Kleiber et al., 2002).

Optimism has been linked to many beneficial outcomes for people with disabilities and illnesses. Hope and optimism are linked to higher levels of tenacity in the face of difficulties or problems and better overall coping (Carver, Scheier, Miller, & Fulford, 2009). Optimism is directly linked to the concept of recovery in mental illness and is seen to be one of the necessary components of creating a life of meaning for people with severe and persistent mental illness (Resnick, Fontana, Lehman, & Rosenheck, 2005). Finally, optimism has been shown to be beneficial to recovery from physical illness and treatments (Rasmussen, Scheier, & Greenhouse, 2009). Thus, optimism is an essential capacity for living well with illness or disability.

Sense of Meaning

The belief that one's life has meaning, as well as engagement in activity that is perceived as meaningful, is a resource that is central to well-being (Seligman, 2002). Individuals who have a guiding vision of what matters most in life and construct their lives around that which gives life meaning are more likely to experience life coherence and well-being (Antonovsky, 1987). Individuals who commit themselves to something larger than themselves and then act on that commitment experience greater well-being (Seligman). Individuals who find new, positive meaning in life through adversity often experience happiness and personal growth as a result (Taylor et al., 2000).

Leisure can help give one's life meaning (Iwasaki, 2007). Leisure can provide a context for many types of experiences that contribute to life's meaning, including contemplation, beauty, love, friendship, accomplishment, excitement, and prayer (Kleiber, 1999). Leisure can include philanthropic leisure experiences, such as volunteering, or involvement in faith communities that connect individuals to something greater than themselves (Piliavin, 2003). Kleiber and colleagues (2002) described the role of leisure in the meaning-making process associated with adjustment to disability. They indicated that part of post-traumatic growth was a shift in what was perceived as meaningful in life, with an increased attention to and appreciation of moment-to-moment life and relationships with friends and family. They suggested that leisure is an important component of this moment-to-moment appreciation, as

well as the savoring of relationships. Finally, the disengagement that occurs in relaxed leisure allows for the period of reflection that is necessary for making sense of one's life experience (Hutchinson et al., 2003).

Cognitive Functioning

The contribution of cognitive functioning or resources to health and well-being has been articulated by a variety of authors. From a holistic perspective, cognition is defined as the ability to learn and process information in order to engage optimally with one's environment. Examples of cognitive resources that help individuals to adapt to their lives and experience a sense of personal agency include the abilities to attend and concentrate, follow directions, remember important material, set goals, solve problems, generalize information, and use real-world information to respond to environmental demands. These cognitive resources affect individuals' ability to navigate their daily lives and also affect their ability to engage in satisfying leisure activities, thus affecting well-being.

The relationship between leisure experiences and cognitive resources is reciprocal. Leisure can enhance cognitive resources, and cognitive resources can enhance leisure involvement. Play behaviors, especially unstructured play, in children promote problem-solving, language development, abstract reasoning, creativity, self-regulation, executive function, and memory (Brown & Vaughan, 2009). Involvement in intellectually challenging cognitive leisure activity, as well as engaging social, physical, and community leisure activities, in young, middle, and late adulthood has been found to be associated with enhanced cognitive function and less cognitive decline, including dementia, in later life (Hultsch, Hertzog, Small, & Dixon, 1999; Richards, Hardy, & Wadsworth, 2003).

Participation in stimulating, optimally challenging intellectual, physical, and social leisure experiences may result in denser neural growth and branching in the brain that leads to greater neural efficiency, plasticity, and cognitive reserve (Singh-Manoux, Richards, & Marmot, 2003). These cognitive reserves can reduce the loss of intellectual and functional capacity often associated with neurological disabilities, such as dementia (Snowden, 1997) and multiple sclerosis (Sumowski, Wylie, DeLuca, & Chiaravalloti, 2010), and allow individuals to maintain involvement in meaningful and satisfying life activities. Social, mental, and physical leisure may function to elevate compensatory cognitive reserves and neural plasticity through neural synaptic growth, better cerebrovascular blood flow, and stress reduction (Fratiglioni, Paillard-Borg, & Winblad, 2004).

Leisure contexts may be an optimal context for developing cognitive resources because they are more enjoyable and less threatening than other educational and treatment environments. People learn best when they are enjoying the process and creating their own experiences. Positive emotion puts one in a mindset to attempt new intellectual challenges and thereby expand personal capacities (Fredrickson, 2009). Leisure is an optimal context for the development of cognitive resources.

Social Resources

Relatedness or social connectedness has been identified as a fundamental human need that motivates much of human behavior (Deci & Ryan, 2008). These social connections and capacities are linked to well-being and are important resources for creating happiness, strength, and capacity (Keyes & Lopez, 2002). Quality relationships are associated with positive emotion (Watson, 2002), resiliency and coping (Frydenberg, 2002; Mikulincer & Florian, 1998), and one's willingness to take the risks necessary for personal growth (Ornish, 1998). The LWM considers social resources to be those capacities and strengths that lie within the individual and that allow for meaningful social engagement. These social resources include such things as communication skills, interpersonal skills, reciprocal relationship skills, and social confidence and are commonly identified in the health literature as directly linked to disease prevention, health maintenance, recovery, and adaptation (Hawkley & Cacioppo, 2003: Scarmeas & Stern, 2003). Conversely, loneliness has been linked to increased mortality and morbidity (Hawkley & Cacioppo).

Leisure is often seen as an ideal context in which to develop social and relationship skills. Many authors have suggested that social outcomes are often the major motivation for leisure involvement (Caldwell, 2005). Moreover, leisure is often viewed as a social context for development of intimate relationships and for expression of social identities. Caldwell and Gilbert (1990) summed up the relationship between leisure and social interaction and support: "Often participation in leisure activities is predicated on having friends and social skills. On the other hand, through recreational activities, many people develop social skills that allow them to be successful not only in leisure pursuits, but in everyday life as well" (p. 115).

Social resources may be directly or indirectly impacted by disability and illness. Some illnesses or disabilities, particularly those that that involve some limitation in cognitive functioning, impact social interactions and resources by limiting communication skills or the ability to sustain conversations. More often, however, the experience of illness or disability limits social resources by setting into place conditions that create social isolation (Alonso et al., 2009). This social isolation often results in the need to develop new social capacities (such as assertiveness, relationship development skills, and others), and isolation may result in loss of confidence in the use of existing skills. Thus, the experience of illness and disability, with the frequently corresponding change in sense of self, often results in changes or limitations in social resources.

Physical Resources

Physical resources such as physical health, fitness, mobility, energy, and vitality have been identified by a number of individuals as being important to overall well-being. These capacities support ongoing involvement in valued daily living and leisure activities, as well as independence in general. Research consistently links physical fitness, an important physical resource, to disease prevention and health promotion (Panedo & Dahn, 2005). Additionally, involvement in physical activity

increases positive mood and reduces depression (Panedo & Dahn) that, in turn, affect physical health (Frasure-Smith & Lesperance, 2008). With the decline in work-related physical activity in daily life, leisure remains an important context for the development and maintenance of a broad array of physical resources. When individuals participate in a physical activity that is enjoyable and personally valued, they are much more likely to sustain their involvement, and it is more likely to contribute to their physical and emotional well-being.

However, research suggests that leisure's potential for positive impact on physical resources extends beyond physical leisure activity and may reflect the capacity of leisure experiences to facilitate positive emotion and reduce distress. Older women's engagement in cultural events and older men's involvement in studying and self-development activities are associated with better subjective health, even when controlling for obesity and health behaviors (Nummela, Sulander, Rahkonen, & Uutela, 2008). Time spent in nature, as well as viewing images of nature, is restorative, revitalizing, and contributes to positive health, beyond the contributions of physical and social activity (Ryan et al., 2010). Vacationing also has physical health benefits (Gump & Matthews, 2000), as do social leisure activities (Glass, de Leon, Marottoli, & Berkman, 1999) and volunteering (Piliavin & Seigl, 2007).

There is a reciprocal relationship between physical resources and well-being. For example, individuals who are physically active will have greater strength and endurance, leading to greater energy levels. Higher energy, vitality, and fitness levels lead to an increased desire to participate in activities. Thus, consistent with the broaden-and-build theory, which suggests that resources create a positive spiral (Fredrickson, 2009), acquiring basic physical resources leads to the development of a larger and more varied repertoire of activities, which, in turn, contributes to positive emotion and personal growth.

Physical resources are obviously directly impacted by illness or disability, especially if the associated limitations are within the physical domain. Fatigue, changed patterns of mobility, pain, muscle weakness, and others are all common physical limitations associated with illness and disability. However, the impact on physical resources is not only linked to physical illness and disability. Stressful life events, including overcoming attitudinal and physical barriers to involvement, can reduce one's energy and motivation for engagement in the activities that enhance physical resources; efficacy in one's ability to overcome these challenges is essential to involvement. Unfortunately, although individuals with illnesses and disabilities benefit greatly from experiences that promote the acquisition of physical resources, they have less access to many of the fitness, outdoor, travel, and social activities that contribute to their accrual (Freudenberg & Arlinghaus, 2010; Lee & McCormick, 2006).

Environmental Resources

Environmental resources are those resources outside of the individual that facilitate well-being, such as access to social, educational, career, and leisure opportunities and supports. Historically, people with disabilities have been marginalized from

employment, education, and participation in their communities, thereby restricting access to the environmental resources necessary for the creation of a life that is enjoyable and cultivates their full human potential.

Social connections and networks introduce people to new possibilities, experiences, and community resources. The resources that emerge from these social networks are called social capital and are characterized by social support, social participation, reciprocity, and trust (Nieminen et al., 2010). Engagement in one's community provides a sense of belonging, contexts in which to develop competencies, opportunities to enact social agency, and opportunities for personal growth and satisfaction. Social capital predicts happiness and life satisfaction, as well as psychological and physical well-being (Nieminen et al.).

Social networks are composed of family, friends and acquaintances, work connections, and relationships formed from participation in formal and informal communal leisure activities and organizations (Sluzki, 2010). Leisure is a context for creating social ties and, ultimately, social capital through the creation of "bonding and bridging opportunities, social support, and civic engagement" (Son, Yarnal, & Kerstetter, 2010). It provides opportunities to engage in meaningful activity that contributes to others and community, as well as develop new interests and skills, and experience personal transformation (Son et al.). Leisure support networks also help people cope with transitions and negative life events. Leisure activities through which people come together with other members of their neighborhood and community, not necessarily geographical, contribute to well-being (Kingsley, Townsend, & Henderson-Wilson, 2009).

Leisure, as a context for the development of generative social networks, is an important vehicle for community inclusion, creating bridges between people with and without disabilities and reducing the stereotypes and stigma associated with disability (Aitchison, 2009; Dattilo et al., 2008). Serious leisure (Stebbins, 2006), that is leisure that requires effort and persistence and becomes a central life interest, can introduce people with disabilities to others with similar passions and enhance personal competencies, sense of agency, and purpose (Patterson & Pegg, 2009). People with disabilities with a strong social network are more likely to engage in meaningful leisure activities that allow them to express their talents and abilities, thereby preventing depression (Krause, 2010), and to engage in the physical activity necessary for physical health, which, in turn, contributes to further physical engagement (Santiago & Coyle, 2004).

Leisure contexts and activities provide an important doorway to community involvement. Often, it is through leisure activities that people with disabilities begin their engagement in community affairs. Unfortunately, people with disabilities often lack access to accessible leisure environments, accommodating programs and services, adapted equipment, and accessible transportation or may lack knowledge of resource availability (Stumbo & Peterson, 2004). They are often excluded from recreation opportunities due to architectural, attitudinal, functional, and behavioral barriers and are more likely to engage in solitary leisure, rather than leisure with friends or acquaintances (Aitchison, 2009). When leisure resources are lacking, it becomes essential that community members, together with

individuals with disabilities, become advocates for the planning and provision of these resources. Personal and collective advocacy, in itself, is a form of empowerment for people with disabilities and increases social capital (Patterson & Pegg, 2009).

Leisure involvement, advocacy, and social action provide opportunities for the empowerment of individuals with disabilities. Always being at the receiving end of assistance or support undermines empowerment, while reciprocal, interdependent relationships strengthen it (Hasler, 2004). Therefore, people with disabilities should be involved in the planning and continual evolution of their own leisure experiences, as well as helping to identify and remove the barriers that preclude their leisure participation. Collective social involvement and action contribute to political power and leverage within the larger community (Son et al., 2010). Albeit challenging, the full engagement of individuals in the battle to assure their full access to the transformative power of leisure may make a significant contribution to their social capital, as well as their subjective and psychological well-being (Patterson & Pegg, 2009).

In conclusion, it is clear that the leisure context, with its relative freedom, and the leisure experience, with its corresponding sense of intrinsic motivation and pleasure, are important avenues through which to develop well-being. However, it is also clear that not all individuals have the same capacity or opportunity to capitalize on the value of leisure for creating a meaningful life. The LWM provides direction for practitioners who wish to support individuals' engagement in leisure that facilitates positive emotion, the development of capacities, and ultimately, well-being. For example, the component, enhancing leisure experience, can be used to define the way that leisure education interventions are conceptualized and implemented. TR practitioners could create leisure education and/or psychoeducational programs that incorporate the five dimensions of enhancing leisure experience to help clients develop the ability to (a) savor positive leisure experiences, (b) make leisure choices that are authentic and feel "right," (c) choose and engage in leisure experiences that cultivate personal strengths and capacities, (d) learn to be fully present in their current leisure experience, and (e) engage in leisure experiences that make a positive contribution to the world in some way.

The Leisure and Well-Being Model facilitates program evaluation and research through the articulation of the causal pathways that theoretically and empirically link the various components of the model. These pathways set the stage for program evaluation and research designed to examine the effectiveness of services in bringing about the desired changes (Cato, 2006). Most of the research that supports the LWM comes from outside the TR field. Therapeutic recreation specialists and researchers must begin to more systematically examine the outcomes of TR service. These efforts can occur at the level of program outcomes: Do the program sessions and activities result in the desired learning and/or behavioral outcomes? In other words, do the three sessions in the savoring leisure intervention increase clients' capacity to savor their leisure experiences? Program evaluation efforts can also occur at an intermediate level: Do the programs sessions and activities result in the desired impact on the intermediate outcomes of increasing psychological, cognitive, social, physical, and environmental resources? For example, does enhancing capacity to savor and be

mindful in leisure result in increased capacity for happiness or self-awareness on a daily basis? Finally, the longer-term impacts of TR programs can be evaluated in terms of their relationship to enhanced well-being.

In closing, as Lollar (2003) suggested, people with disabilities and illness want to do more than recover functioning; they want to build a life of meaning and engagement; they want to feel their lives have purpose and value; they want to experience happiness and a sense of connection to others; and they want to feel that they are powerful agents in their own lives. The Leisure and Well-Being Model of therapeutic recreation provides a framework for leisure professionals who wish to support clients in their pursuit of these aspirations. This framework articulates a focus on strengths-based practice and the development of capacities and resources needed to adapt and thrive, along with a focus on the creation of opportunities for joy, satisfaction, and contentment. The LWM articulates the value of leisure in supporting both of these aims, provides research evidence for the effectiveness of this approach, and serves as a guide for the delivery of professional practice.

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Chapter 8
Flow and Leisure

Kim Perkins and Jeanne Nakamura

Leisure has eluded definition by social scientists despite decades of theory, research, and applied work on the topic. According to one analysis (Primeau, 1996), there are three prominent ways of defining leisure: (a) the residual time available outside of productive and maintenance activity (sometimes simply described as nonwork time), (b) the set of activities that people identify as leisure pursuits in a culture, and (c) a positive experiential state whose essence is the experience of being freely chosen and intrinsically rewarding. Each definition has limitations, and the lack of consensus has been a challenge for the field of leisure science.

However we choose to define and delimit the phenomenon of leisure, we probably can agree that we think of the paradigmatic leisure experience as a positive one. Of course, all periods of discretionary time and all normatively defined leisure activities are not positive experientially. For children, adolescents, and adults (Csikszentmihalyi & Larson, 1984; Holder, Coleman, & Sehn, 2009; Kubey & Csikszentmihalyi, 2002), active leisure is generally more engaging than passive leisure, but most of us devote plenty of time to the latter. "Leisure boredom" is commonplace, particularly in adolescence, and is associated with substance abuse and other developmentally ominous behaviors (Wegner & Flisher, 2009). But for most individuals throughout the life course, the enjoyment of leisure is a desideratum and holds potential benefits both immediate and long term. The goal animating a positive leisure science thus may be delineated clearly even if the concept itself remains contested: *to understand the nature and conditions of optimal experience in leisure time/pursuits.*

Many leisure scholars suggest that, optimally, the leisure state is characterized by perceived freedom and intrinsic motivation (e.g., Mannell, Zuzanek, & Larson, 1988). In experiencing freedom, one feels that an activity is being undertaken voluntarily

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(a notion that does not preclude a sense of responsibility or commitment; see, e.g., Stebbins, 1992). In experiencing an activity as intrinsically rewarding, one feels that the activity is being pursued for its own sake, because of the positive experiential state that it can afford rather than for benefits lying outside of the immediate experience (a notion that does not require that every moment is equally pleasant).

Beyond this, some have observed that a distinction should be made between two kinds of positive experience that leisure ideally can provide: one, a state of relaxed receptiveness and the other, a state of engagement in action, physical, or mental. In the psychology of positive emotions, these correspond to low-activation positive affect and high-activation positive affect (Kleiber, 2000; Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2009). Although other positive leisure states exist (e.g., hedonic pleasure), these two are distinguished by close connection to human development and growth. In this chapter, we will focus on the second, by examining the flow state, which has been studied empirically for several decades and to a significant extent illuminates and also is illuminated by the study of leisure. We will address implications of flow theory and research for each of the three definitions of leisure mentioned at the outset. First, with respect to leisure as a positive experiential state, we discuss the model of flow experience distilled from descriptions of activities pursued for their own sake. Second, we consider how the documentation of this positive state in both work and play problematizes the definition of leisure as discretionary, or nonwork, activity. Finally, we discuss the experience of flow in activities culturally defined as leisure activities, giving special attention to sports and games.

Flow and the Contribution of Leisure to Its Understanding

Csikszentmihalyi first recognized the deep absorption in an activity later labeled flow while observing full-time artists *at work* (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975). However, his laboratory began systematic research on the subjective phenomenology of activities pursued for their own sake – intrinsically motivated activity – by focusing on adults *at play*. At the heart of that mixed-methods research (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975), from which the flow model derived, was a corpus of interviews with experienced and some novice participants in leisure activities: chess, social dancing, basketball, and rock climbing. A sample of surgeons was also studied, and an important finding both for theory and social action was that the same deep absorption can be experienced in work as well as in play (about which, more later). Still, most of the original research report described what it feels like to be deeply engaged in play. Thus, in articulating the relations between flow and leisure, we might say that first and foremost, the close examination of leisure gave rise to the concept of flow. Given these beginnings, it is unsurprising that the very first scholarly community to see utility in the flow model was the field of leisure studies (Csikszentmihalyi, personal communication, May 2010).

Currently, flow is understood as an experiential state, attainable in many different activities, which can be characterized by nine dimensions. We briefly describe these

dimensions, drawing on the interviews with rock climbers reported in the original study. One hallmark of flow is the experience of total concentration of attention on what one is doing. The past and future, and the environmental stimuli lying outside of the unfolding interaction, recede. As one rock climber put it, "It's a centering thing, being absolutely in the here and now, in the present" (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975, p. 81). A second characteristic of flow is a merging of action and awareness. A climber explained, "You're so involved in what you're doing [that] you aren't thinking about yourself as separate from the immediate activity. You're no longer a participant-observer, only a participant" (p. 86). Related to this complete absorption in the present moment is a third characteristic: loss of the self-consciousness that disrupts immersion in the flow of activity. When in flow, one no longer steps outside of the stream of experience, watching and judging the self. "When you first start climbing you're very aware of your capabilities. But after a while you just do it without reflecting on it at the time" (p. 87), a climber explained.

Three other characteristics of flow describe what might be called proximal conditions of this state of full engagement (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2002). First, there are clear goals; one's aims are not in question. In climbing, the goal in one sense is simply to reach the top. More specifically, a climber might be clear that the goal for a climb is to take the most direct path up the rock face, or to make the most economical and elegant series of moves possible. However, as a proximal condition for entering and staying in flow, the goals at any given moment (find the best next foothold to navigate around this obstacle, maintain the other points of contact with the rock) must also be clear. In addition to this clarity of purpose, there is immediate, unambiguous feedback to one's actions. One sees how one is doing (a foot is placed, then slips), adjusts the course of action (another foothold is tried), receives new feedback, and if necessary adjusts again. As a result, a climber could say of the process, "It's self-catalyzing …. The move you're planning to do is also the genesis of the move you're to do after you've done that one" (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975, p. 85). Motivation can be described as emergent (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi). Finally, in flow, one's capacities for action are fully employed. One's skills are stretched by the challenges perceived in the immediate situation.

When these conditions are present and the individual is fully engaged, a sense of control is experienced. One climber noted, "Once you're into the situation … you're very much in charge of it" (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975, p. 81). More precisely, one feels not that one knows and can dictate what will happen, but rather that one will be able to respond to whatever occurs. Furthermore, the sense of time is distorted. Time may dilate, seeming to slow down or stand still. One may lose all track of time and later feel that it has passed very quickly. The climber absorbed in the climb describes experiencing an "eternal moment" (p. 87). Finally, even if it not remarked during the experience itself, after the fact that the experience is perceived as having been intensely enjoyable and is valued for its own sake, it is "autotelic." As stated modestly by a climber, "It's a pleasant feeling of total involvement" (p. 86).

It was clear from these early reports that the flow state is inherently fragile. It depends on a set of conditions that are comparatively rare in most lives: clear goals, immediate and clear feedback, and opportunities for action that stretch one's capacities.

In contrast, much of daily life is characterized by conflicting claims on attention; inadequate, delayed, or ambiguous feedback to one's actions; and either overwhelming demands that encourage anxiety or a dearth of challenge that gives rise to boredom. Rock climbing is not a simple natural act. Rather, like many forms of leisure – organized sports and games, art forms, and hobbies – it depends on a culturally provided system of goals, rules, and tools. The latter features define and structure participants' opportunities for action in a manner that facilitates entering the flow state. Depending on the complexity of the goals, rules, tools, and opportunities for action more generally, these activities can open extended pathways for development and growth. In this way, rock climbing and many other leisure time pursuits are prototypic *flow activities*. One might suggest that they exist to provide experiences of intense absorption. An initial understanding of the nature of flow activities might be viewed as a second contribution of studying leisure to flow theory.

Measuring Flow

In the study of leisure and beyond it, flow has been measured in several ways: by interview, survey, and Experience Sampling Method. This chapter cites studies using each of these methods. The concept of flow emerged from interviews with people about what it feels like when an activity is going well (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975). Although many other well-validated methods are now available, the semi-structured interview remains a useful tool, particularly in exploratory research (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2009).

Several well-validated survey instruments exist for measuring flow in specific leisure settings. The most commonly used scales for sports are the Flow State Scale (Jackson & Marsh, 2002), which is given immediately after sports events to measure flow states during the event, and the Dimensional Flow Scale (Jackson & Marsh, 2002), which measures an individual's trait-level tendencies to experience flow in the activity. Each of these instruments has 36 items, or four for each of the nine dimensions of flow, and has been successfully used with musical performance and other nonsport activities. Items include "I do things spontaneously and automatically without having to think" and "the experience is extremely rewarding." Brief, nine-item versions of the FSS-2 and DFS-2 scales have also been validated (Jackson, Martin, & Eklund, 2008). The short scales include one item for each of the established nine dimensions of flow (e.g., sense of control and time transformation). Similarly, in the domain of video games, Kiili's Flow Scale for Games (2006) uses 19 of the FSS-2 items, with additional items evaluating the technology of the video game interface.

One disadvantage of both survey and interview methods is that they require participants to reconstruct an experience retrospectively, a process which may alter the content of the experience being recalled. The Experience Sampling Method (ESM) was developed in order to study experience in situ (for a detailed description, see

Chap. 6 by Bassi and Delle Fave in this volume). In ESM studies, participants are paged at various times during the day throughout the period of study. The page is the cue for participants to describe what they were thinking, feeling, and doing just before being paged. Thus, the ESM is a way of taking random samples from everyday experience. Using ESM, one may rate the degree to which each experience contains the conditions that produce flow and the dimensions of the flow state.

Flow in Leisure Viewed as Discretionary Time

In general, leisure time is experienced positively (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975). Besides providing the opportunity for rest and relaxation, leisure provides time for engaging activities that develop skills and open new access to enjoyment. "Games like chess, religious rituals, and artistic forms were developed to provide finite enjoyable experiences within the interstices of real life" (Csikszentmihalyi, p. 73).

The study of flow contains interesting implications for the definition of leisure as time spent away from work, in that when activities are intrinsically motivated, the distinction between leisure and work is often blurry. Delle Fave and Massimini (1988) found that among Italian farmers pursuing a traditional way of life, younger and older participants found different activities flow-producing. Older participants did not make a distinction between work and leisure activities; they experienced a high degree of autonomy and enjoyment in such traditional work activities as tilling soil, spinning thread, and tending to farm animals. Younger, modernized participants, on the other hand, found much more flow in leisure pursuits such as skiing, playing soccer, riding motorcycles, or spending time with friends and treated the traditional nonleisure activities described above as distractions. Older participants spent less time in leisure activities (such as playing bocce or cards) and experienced less flow in them than in work activities.

If a distinction is made between work and leisure time, ESM studies have shown that adults spend more time in flow during work than during leisure (Bryce & Haworth, 2002; LeFevre, 1988; Rheinberg & Engeser, 2008), perhaps because work activities tend to have more structure than leisure activities, thereby providing more of the conditions for flow. Mannell, Zuzanek, and Larson (1988) demonstrated that freely chosen structured activities with extrinsic rewards produced the highest levels of flow (cf. Stebbins' "serious leisure"). Although the phenomenon of flow was originally delineated in leisure contexts, paradoxically, people do not tend to choose high-skill, high-challenge activities with clear goals and unambiguous feedback, even though they are happier while doing them. Instead, people more often choose low-challenge, low-skill activities such as watching TV or talking, thereby choosing rest over stimulation. It may be possible that people cannot consistently maintain the high levels of concentration required in flow-producing activities, even though low-challenge, low-skill activities do not contribute as much to their well-being as flow-producing activities (LeFevre, 1988).

Gender Differences

A difficulty of the definition of leisure as nonwork involves differences in the way men and women experience flow in leisure, based on differences in context (Henderson, 1990). For example, both men and women may consider swimming a leisure activity and may spend equal amounts of time swimming. However, if one examines the context, women may be taking care of children in the process of swimming, while men might be more likely to pursue swimming for its own sake (Henderson). This difference in context may result in differences in flow experiences; those watching children while swimming may experience more interruptions and less intrinsic motivation and therefore less flow, while those who pursue swimming exclusively for its own value may experience more flow.

Allison and Duncan (1988) found that women particularly experienced flow in leisure activities that allowed a sense of autonomy, control, and mastery. Flow was reported in such activities as gardening, leisure travel, golf, concerts, reading books, crafts such as needlework or ceramics, and fixing things around the house. Further, professional women experienced more challenge and creativity in their jobs, leading to more flow experiences, while blue-collar women experienced more mastery and control in their home environments, leading to a meaningful sense of "rootedness" (p. 133). For professional women, work and home life boundaries were blurred, while blue-collar women made a distinction between being "at work" and "at home."

These gender differences may be an artifact of the distinction between work and leisure time, a distinction that may itself be seen as an artifact of certain twentieth-century expectations around the nature and form of work (Hendricks & Cutler, 2003). Such a distinction serves well to describe mid-twentieth-century jobs in industrialized nations but is problematic when discussing entrepreneurial work, farmwork, housework, child-rearing, and the myriad blends of work and play facilitated by technology in the twenty-first century (Rousseau, 1997). As communications technology such as cell phones and the Internet allows us to be connected to both jobs and leisure activities 24 h a day, it is hard to tell whether the woman knitting handicrafts for sale on her Web site is at work or at leisure.

Flow in Leisure Viewed as Engagement in Specific Activities

Another way to define leisure is by specifying leisure activities, and the field of leisure studies has no shortage of taxonomies of leisure activities (Iwasaki, Mannell, Swale, & Butcher, 2005). For example, Ragheb (1980) developed a leisure behavior inventory that consists of 41 activities grouped into six categories: mass media, sports activities, social activities, cultural activities, outdoor activities, and hobbies, and flow has been documented in activities belonging to each of these categories. However, flow researchers using the Experience Sampling Method have found it useful to categorize leisure activities by their potential for engagement. Therefore, leisure activities are commonly categorized as passive leisure, active leisure, and

social interaction. Activities categorized as passive leisure, which feature consumption of mass media, are considered less flow-producing than active leisure activities, such as making crafts or playing sports and games; we discuss them only briefly. A great deal of the literature on flow in leisure activities focuses on sports and games; these areas will form our focus as well. As for social interaction, several recent studies have contributed to understanding the ways that social roles, norms, and settings influence the experience of flow.

Flow and Passive Leisure

Watching TV is one of the most common but least flow-producing activities. Turning on the television produces feelings of relaxation. Yet rather than leaving viewers refreshed afterward, viewers report lowered positive affect and more difficulty concentrating after viewing (Kubey & Csikszentmihalyi, 2002). In contrast, reading is also classified as a passive leisure activity, and yet participants often report it as a primary source of flow (Allison & Duncan, 1988; Delle Fave & Massimini, 1988, 2003). Green, Brock, and Kaufman (2004) posit that enjoyment of media stems from the experience of immersion, which they term "transportation into a narrative world." Being transported in this sense shares several characteristics with flow in that participants shed self-awareness and lose track of time. However, reading is less passive than TV viewing and requires a higher level of skill (Kubey & Csikszentmihalyi, 1990), which may account for the finding that participants identify reading, but not television, a source of flow.

Flow in the Active Leisure Activities of Sports and Games

A great deal of flow research on active leisure has focused on sports and games. A sport or game can provide all of the key proximal conditions of flow: clear goals, unambiguous feedback, and high challenge. Sports and games also provide a controlled environment for the quantitative study of experience, in that challenges, rules, and goals can be easily manipulated, standardized, and measured within and between individuals.

Sports psychologist Susan Jackson has made many studies to determine which conditions and factors can help athletes achieve a flow state. She makes a distinction between traits that contribute to an individual's overall ability to experience flow in an activity and the psychological factors that facilitate achieving a flow state in a given situation. However, she finds that the same three psychological factors are the top contributors to both trait and state flow: perceived ability, intrinsic motivation to experience stimulation, and level of anxiety (Jackson, Thomas, Marsh, & Smethurst, 2001).

Perceived ability is the strongest factor facilitating a flow state. According to the flow model, flow only takes place in situations where both challenge and skill are

high. Athletes who believe their skills are highly developed may be more likely to challenge themselves and to perceive that skills and challenge are in balance, beyond any objective assessment of challenge and skill (Jackson et al., 2001; Jackson & Roberts, 1992).

Another factor is intrinsic motivation to experience stimulation. This occurs when a person's main motivation for performing an athletic activity is to experience the inherent pleasure, excitement, or expressiveness involved in moving the body during the activity itself. As stated earlier, flow theory arose from the study of intrinsically motivated activities. Deci and Ryan (1985) have suggested that people experience more flow in activities that are intrinsically motivated, while Csikszentmihalyi has suggested that experiencing flow repeatedly in an activity leads to intrinsic motivation (in Jackson, Kimiecik, Ford, & Marsh, 1998, p. 375). However, in the above-referenced study (Jackson et al., 1998), none of the other dimensions of intrinsic motivation showed as strong a relationship with flow as the dimension of seeking physical sensation.

According to Jackson, the third major facilitator of the experience of flow is the absence of anxiety. When anxious or worried, an athlete perceives the challenges of the situation to be greater than his or her skills. Jackson et al. (1998) called the psychological state of anxiety "the antithesis of flow." In that study, three dimensions of anxiety were measured: somatic anxiety, or physical manifestations such as butterflies in the stomach; worry, or intrusive thoughts; and concentration disruption. The cognitive components – worry and concentration disruption – showed the strongest negative correlations with flow. Worry, in particular, is associated with self-consciousness and therefore stands as an obstacle to immersion in a situation, a defining dimension of flow. Athletes who perceived their ability as low were more prone to worry and anxiety, further disrupting their ability to experience flow.

In general, people experiencing more flow in athletics make better strategic use of psychological skills relating to regulating arousal, processing information, and managing emotions (Jackson et al., 2001). Training in the use of these psychological processes has often been an integral part of programs designed to enhance athletic performance; it is useful to note that training these skills enhances intrinsic enjoyment as well as the likelihood of extrinsic reward.

The Role of Challenge

Many researchers consider the balance of challenge and skill to be the defining condition of flow. Challenge can be defined subjectively based on a person's assessment of his or her skill relative to the situation, or objectively, based on the skill levels of opponents, as in chess, or the inherent risks of the situation, as in rock climbing. According to the original flow model, a pleasurable game of chess requires competing players to be closely matched in ability. If one player is significantly more skilled than his opponent, neither player will experience the crucial balance of

challenge and skill. Chess players most often report finding enjoyment in the "intellectual challenge" of the game, as well as its social value, yielding opportunities for both competition and camaraderie (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975). In Abuhamdeh and Csikszentmihalyi's (2009) studies of competitive recreational chess players, intrinsic motivational orientation was associated with the strength of the curvilinear relationship between challenge and enjoyment. Intrinsically motivated players enjoyed a challenge more than players who were focused on the goal of winning, although too much challenge inhibited enjoyment for all. Further, extrinsically motivated players had stronger affective responses to the outcome of the competition than intrinsically motivated players. This study shows that in self-chosen leisure, participants often prefer to be overchallenged rather than underchallenged – indeed, they prefer games in which they have a better than even chance of losing. This preference may be most visible in the naturalistic study of leisure, rather than in experimental conditions or in the study of work.

Flow and Danger

Early research demonstrated that flow can occur in both high-risk activities, such as rock climbing, and low-risk activities such as chess. This illuminates the relationship between flow and arousal. Arousal is related to subjective internal states, such as anxiety, and to objective conditions, such as the level of danger inherent in the activity. Arousal has a curvilinear relationship with flow; some is necessary to produce flow, yet too much arousal inhibits flow by producing incompatible feelings such as anxiety and worry (cf. Jackson & Roberts, 1992; Jackson, Kimiecik, Ford, & Marsh, 1998). ESM studies of flow in adventure sports, however, indicate that because of inherent danger in the activity, flow and anxiety can sometimes coexist in close time proximity. Several studies have shown that an adventure experience is later considered optimal when both flow and anxiety have been high, as when paddling down a dangerous rapid (Jones, Hollenhorst, Perna, & Selin, 2000). The authors followed 52 kayakers of varying levels of expertise as they ran the Cheat River in the course of a single day. Self-reports of flow, affect, activation, and anxiety were collected at the put-in just before each rapid and the take-out immediately following each rapid, for a total of 409 observations. Paddlers experienced the most control in the least dangerous rapids, as well as the most boredom and apathy. In the most dangerous rapids, flow and anxiety were experienced with equal frequency. Anxiety reached its peak just before the first dangerous rapid, and flow reached its peak just after the last dangerous rapid, leading the authors to conclude that anxiety experiences did not necessarily inhibit flow experiences, especially as positive affect was reported even in the presence of anxiety.

Nonetheless, Csikszentmihalyi's (1975) study of rock climbing belies the notion that danger is a requirement in flow-producing activities. Although the activity is undeniably dangerous, rock climbers take enormous safety precautions and play

down the risks in their self-talk, rather than seeking out risks and playing them up, as one might expect if danger indeed predicated increased enjoyment. These findings were later confirmed in the ESM study on rock climbers reported in Bassi and Delle Fave in this volume (Chap. 6).

Flow in the Presence of Extrinsic Reward

Many flow-producing activities carry extrinsic rewards in certain situations. An athlete, seamstress, or dancer may take up an activity for the inherent love of doing it and later find herself in a position to earn money in exchange for peak performance. Enjoyment, while a factor in peak performance, does not ensure it. According to self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000), the presence of extrinsic rewards is seen to inhibit intrinsic motivation in experimental situations. Nonetheless, there is also ample evidence that people experience flow in situations where performance may lead to extrinsic rewards (Jackson & Roberts, 1992; Mannell, Zuzanek, & Larson, 1988; Russell, 2002).

Too great a focus on results and rewards during performance can inhibit both optimal experience and peak performance by evoking anxiety, worry, or self-consciousness, each of which is damaging to flow. Therefore, flow experiences are generally considered to be inhibited by highly competitive attitudes (Jackson & Roberts, 1992; Russell, 2002). While some degree of arousal is necessary to experience flow, too much arousal – in this case construed as anxiety about results rather than danger – inhibits it completely.

When competitiveness is associated with anxiety about results, higher trait competitiveness is associated with fewer flow experiences (Jackson & Roberts, 1992). The best-known style of interpersonal competitiveness, often called hypercompetitiveness (Horney, 1937; Ryckman, Hammer, Kaczor, & Gold, 1990), is a desire to demonstrate a trait-based superiority over rivals; the purpose of competition is to reveal one's identity as a winner or a loser. However, other styles of competitiveness treat rivals as teachers, with the outcome of the competition as a benchmark for one's own personal development; the desire to win is still present, but the individual's sense of self does not depend so critically on winning in every situation. Ryckman, Hammer, Kaczor, and Gold (1996) have called this style of competitiveness a personal development competitive attitude. In an international sample of adult runners, cyclists, and triathletes, the personal development competitive attitude was seen to have a positive relationship with trait-level ability to experience flow, while hypercompetitiveness had no relationship (Perkins, unpublished manuscript).

As an alternative to a competitive orientation toward other people, previous studies have considered the impact of a mastery orientation on flow. Jackson and Roberts (1992) found that mastery orientation (as opposed to interpersonal orientation) was positively correlated with flow experiences for college athletes. That is, people who concentrate on mastering the task rather than beating others experience more flow. A general motivation toward outcomes was not correlated with poorer performance, except when the athlete focused on outcomes during the actual competition.

Computer-Based Activities

Computer-simulated worlds including informational and social Web sites, games, chat environments, e-mail discussions, and Internet shopping have become important parts of leisure culture in the past 10 years. From early on, researchers have been interested in using the concept of flow to design computer-based entertainment that will enrapture viewers and encourage repeated uses (cf. the Csikszentmihalyi interview, "Go with the Flow," in *Wired Magazine*, 1996). Many of the "early" uses of flow in computer-based entertainment have been in designing Web interfaces for commerce, information gathering, and socializing (cf. Chen, Wigand, & Nilan, 1999; Hoffman & Novak, 1997). The burgeoning video game industry, especially, has deeply embraced flow as a model of optimal enjoyment (Järvinen, 2007); each of the nine dimensions of flow has received research attention as well. In the last 5 years especially, video game theory and design has drawn interest from doctoral-level scholars and theorists from such diverse disciplines as theater, artificial intelligence, sociology, computer science, humanities, and psychology.

Kristian Kiili (2005, 2006) has sought to operationalize flow for use in designing educational video games to tap the full potential of the video game experience to "foster knowledge construction and deepen understanding" (Kiili, 2006, p. 187). For the purpose of building flow into video games, Kiili (2005) refines the flow construct by dividing the nine dimensions into antecedents and indicators. The antecedents, or stimuli which help create flow, are challenge/skill balance, clearly defined goals and unambiguous feedback (cf. the original flow model), action-awareness merging, and sense of control. The indicators of the degree to which flow is experienced are concentration, loss of self-consciousness, transformation of time, and autotelic experience. It may seem peculiar that Kiili categorizes "sense of control" with the antecedents of flow, rather than with the indicators. Kiili relates sense of control to the player's sense that he or she can learn to play the game well enough to not make any mistakes, a sense which Kiili places within the game designer's sphere of influence.

Kiili seeks to clarify the contributions of negative emotions toward defining challenge. Kiili suggests that it is not realistic or possible to create computer-based environments in which the player can be in flow the entire time. Because each new game requires a period of acclimatizing to the controls, it is expected that there will be experiences of anxiety and frustration, along with whatever flow state the game produces. Kiili postulates that these negative states encountered while mastering a game, rather than dampening the flow experience, can act as motivators toward regaining the initial flow state experienced in the easier levels through increased learning and skill mastery.

Further, perceived challenge is not necessarily a predictor of game performance. In his 2006 study of flow experience within a problem-solving game, Kiili found no significant difference in perceived challenge between those who solved the puzzle and those who did not. Kiili attributes this finding to individual differences: some people are more accustomed to challenge than others, and some people are unwilling to concede that they were insufficiently skilled.

Like many game theorists, Aki Jarvinen takes his original inspiration from Roger Caillois' classic work, "Les Jeux et les Hommes" (1958). Following Huizinga's four-type model of play, Caillois concentrated on two types of involvement within a game, *paidia* and *ludus*. *Paidia*, he wrote, is "tumultuous and exuberant" (1961, p. 31), "an almost indivisible principle, component to diversion, turbulence, free improvisation, and carefree gaiety" (p. 13). *Ludus*, on the other hand, is "gratuitous difficulty," "the pleasure experienced in solving a problem arbitrarily designed for this purpose" (p. 27). Jarvinen views the tension between *paidia* and *ludus* as one of the key sources of pleasure in a video game (Järvinen, Heliö, & Mäyrä, 2002), one related to the flow attribute of challenge/skill balance. Jarvinen operationalizes the challenge/skill balance as a learning curve and expects the levels of challenge offered and skill required to vary during gameplay.

As for other attributes of flow, Jarvinen argues that the merging of action and awareness depends entirely on a game's "playability": its elements of structure and tempo, its consistency in terms of the actions it allows and the results that it generates, the aesthetic enjoyment resulting from the audiovisual images, and the social interaction, a key part of multiuser and role-playing games. Playability and structure are also related to concentration on the task at hand. Concentration can be broken by inconsistency on the part of the game's rationality, story, or goal structure, through inappropriate noises or messages, or through problems with the user interface. Thus, playability, though lacking a corresponding construct that applies to nonvirtual environments, may be an additional condition of flow in the video game context.

The user interface is also the source of the user's sense of control over the game's events. Being able to exercise control over the game environment "lies at the heart of meaningful and empowering interactivity" (Järvinen, 2007, p. 25). The sense of control comes from the player's ability level, but also from the level of control the designers give the player to change his environment. In any game situation, certain facets can be influenced and others cannot, and both categories must be consistent and rational in order to enable flow. The game courses the participants deemed the most engaging were those that used players' best skills but required them to play slightly above their skill level. That is to say, players reported the most enjoyment with courses that forced (or allowed) them to be *slightly* out of control.

This finding appears to be inconsistent with the flow-model importance of "sense of control" and "challenge/skill balance" – perhaps even "clear goals" – but it is quite consistent with several other flow-influenced ideas of enjoyment. One element that leaps out is the elegant way this finding captures the tension between *paidia* (which might be the fun of skidding and smashing wildly into walls in a driving simulation) and *ludus* (the rule suggesting one must try not to skid and smash into walls). On a higher order, this finding resonates with Chen et al. (1999) suggestion that video game researchers tend to ignore an original aspect of challenge/skill balance, which is the inducement to stretch one's limits toward increased mastery in order to increase (or remain in a state of) enjoyment. In this sense, the fact that the desire for challenge is a bit at war with the desire for a sense of control may heighten enjoyment of the game.

Flow and Social Interaction

Early research on flow characterized it as an individual phenomenon. Recent work has investigated shared flow experiences in social settings. Two recent studies attempt to delineate social flow, with somewhat contradictory results. Walker (2010) reports that flow can be regulated by different levels of interdependence in an activity. Three levels of interactivity were identified: individual solitary flow, such as painting with watercolors; coactive social flow, in which activities are relatively independent but performed in the company of others, as in taking a mountain hike with an outdoor club; and interactive social flow, in which the task at hand requires cooperation from other individuals, as in ballroom dancing. Both levels of social flow were characterized as more joyful than solitary flow, with activities that were highly interdependent and permitted conversation rated as the most joyful.

Decloe, Kaczynski, and Havitz (2009) examined challenge/skill balance and situational involvement in recreational activities with different partners. Situational involvement is defined as feelings of pleasure and enjoyment having to do with the situation rather than with enduring commitment to an activity as part of one's identity. It is not, therefore, identical to flow, but may be a factor in attaining a flow state. In general, activities performed alone had lower levels of situational involvement than those performed alongside others. Decloe et al. found that compared to activities alone, activities performed in the company of others were not characterized by more frequent flow as measured by challenge and skill levels. Instead, social activity was characterized by higher levels of situational involvement, but also more frequent anxiety, boredom, and apathy. Participation in physical activity alongside an activity-related club or group resulted in the highest levels of situational involvement, while physical activities done alongside coworkers had the lowest ratings, perhaps due to a lack of freedom to choose the parameters of the activity, resulting in activities with suboptimal challenge/skill balance.

Bloch's (2008) qualitative studies of flow and stress reveal several interesting findings concerning how social norms and role expectations regulate the amount of flow reported in leisure activities. When people were assembled around a specific leisure activity, such as playing chess or practicing a dance, experiencing flow was considered normal. The experience required no comment, because all people present are aware of the presence of flow. However, flow experiences are discouraged in settings focused on the development and maintenance of relationships, rather than the development of the activity itself; for example, a highly skilled volleyball player might push the limit of his or her skills at a weekly league game, but hold back from playing hard enough to have a flow experience in a game that takes place at a family picnic lest he or she intimidate the less experienced players. Similarly, Bloch reports that flow experiences at home are often disguised as altruistic projects. Many householders report experiencing flow while performing household maintenance activities that require solitude and concentration, such as sewing or building. A parent may exaggerate the resulting benefit to the family in order to acquire and maintain the space and time for performing the intrinsically rewarding activity.

The Future of Flow Research in Leisure

Flow experiences greatly enhance one's quality of life. Many researchers posit that frequent flow experiences can aid coping and lead to higher levels of life satisfaction (Delle Fave & Massimini, 2003; Mannell et al., 1988). Whether it is defined as nonwork, as specific activities, or in terms of its subjective experience, leisure has proven an important source of flow experiences. Although work also offers opportunities for flow, and leisure also offers opportunities for relaxation, flow experiences in leisure develop our skills and strengths in ways not always found at work and allow us to find new ways to make life enjoyable.

However, a flow state is not necessarily desirable, or possible, at all times. First, although relaxation does not have the same cumulative growth-enhancing benefits as the flow state, it is a strong positive predictor of coping with stress (Iwasaki, Mannell, Smale, & Butcher, 2005). Further, it has been amply noted that the flow state is amoral – one can experience flow in activities that are personally and socially destructive just as easily as in prosocial activities (see Chap. 6 by Bassi and Delle Fave in this volume). Certainly, a great many mountaineers and extreme sports fanatics have lost their lives in pursuit of higher challenges that would yield flow experiences in the face of their ever-growing skills. As the flowless, passive leisure of watching television falls out of favor with a generation that prefers the flow-producing thrills of video games, parents worry that their children may become addicted to cyber-flow experiences. (Wan and Chiou's research (2006), however, suggests that flow is not the culprit; video game players whose behaviors could be classified as addiction displayed lower levels of flow than recreational players.)

Leisure provides us with a context in which to choose activities we find intrinsically motivating. Given this greater perceived freedom, it seems that in leisure, highly challenging experiences are sought after and enjoyed. Intrinsically motivated chess players prefer playing opponents with superior skills. Whitewater kayakers may report experiencing equal amounts of flow and anxiety in the midst of a dangerous rapid and yet enjoy the experience tremendously. Video gamers experience failure, yet are motivated to master increasing levels of difficulty.

Just as challenge and skill are both present in flow experiences, it seems that feelings of anxiety and control are present as well. The two sides are necessary for peak experience; without some anxiety, there would be no indication that a situation is challenging, yet without a sense of control, skills cannot emerge to meet the challenge. Further research is needed to clarify the moment to moment shifts that occur. The study of leisure provides an excellent context for developing new findings regarding the dynamics of positive and negative factors in producing flow experiences in particular and enriching experiences in general.

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Chapter 9
Leisure Time, Physical Activity, and Health

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Introduction

A great deal of evidence supports the many benefits of regular physical activity (PA). Although recent developments have shown the growing importance of genetics on several diseases such as obesity (Maes, Neale, & Eaves, 1997), low levels of PA increase the risk of several chronic diseases and premature mortality (Paffenbarger & Hyde, 1984). Rather, adequate levels of PA include several benefits such as improvements in cardiorespiratory fitness, muscular fitness, bone health, body composition, and cardiovascular as well as metabolic health biomarkers (USDHHS, 2008; WHO, 2010). Therefore, physical inactivity has been categorized as a modifiable risk factor for lifestyle-related diseases with long-term benefits in psychological, physiological, and social domains of human life regardless of the age group (Andersen et al., 2006). For instance, a recent study highlighted that living a physically active lifestyle is associated with a 40% reduction in the genetic predisposition to common obesity (Li et al., 2010), whereas genetic influences on the body mass index (BMI) are lower among those who report vigorous exercise (McCaffery, Papandonatos, Lyons, & Wing, 2009). Similarly, structured exercise training that consists of aerobic exercise, resistance training, or both was associated with HbA1c reduction in patients with type 2 diabetes (Umpierre et al., 2011). Thus, increasing PA is a medical recommendation and a public health policy objective (WHO, 2002). However, PA as part of daily life appears to have declined over years among youth (Strong et al., 2005) and

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during adulthood**.** Hence, youth has been seen as a critical period of intervention and analyses (Trost et al., 2002) because it is believed that adolescents who develop a habit of participating in activities that can be carried over adolescence into adulthood will be more likely to remain active (Vanreusel et al., 1997). For example, patterns of PA as well as sedentary living appear to play an important role in long-term weight regulation (Lowry, Wechsler, Galuska, Fulton, & Kann, 2002). Therefore, it is important to identify the factors related to lack or low levels of PA at the population level looking at preventive strategies across one's life span.

Physical activity policies across the Western countries look toward the participation in sports and exercise activities as an important part of leisure time. Leisure time is the period of recreational and discretionary time, which not only appears to be a critical period that defines the youth propensity for PA (Telama, Nupponen, & Piéron, 2005), but it is also important in adult population PA participation. However, media and other opportunities that lead acquiring knowledge and learning and experiencing new things outside of school and work emphasize the importance of leisure. Indeed, hobbies and other leisure-time activities like music, drama, arts, and dance have come to constitute very important spheres of living and learning, emphasizing the importance of leisure in adolescent life (Aittola, 1998) and among adults**.** Thus, sedentary activities such as TV viewing, reading, working at a computer, or talking with friends on the phone while sitting (Pate, O'Neill, & Lobelo, 2008) have all been incorporated into the delivery of education and leisure (Kerner, Kurrant, & Kalinski, 2004). Moreover, while these activities emerged as an important characteristic of today's lifestyle, they simultaneously represented a major source of inactivity that is carried on from childhood to adolescence and adulthood (Must & Tybor, 2005). Therefore, it is worthy to consider the interrelationships between different leisure-time activities, especially in youth, as they contribute to understanding how and in what context and with whom individuals spend their leisure time and how this might be related to PA involvement.

An important issue is that not all leisure-time activities have the same impact in terms of health benefits. Contemporary daily life is replete with a potential harmful effect in developed societies' quality of life and health outcomes due to the absence of PA. Adolescents have a large component of unstructured free time (40%), and they face several attractive activities other than sports and/or PA. Thus, a sedentary lifestyle and a sedentary-promoting environment are features of our daily lives that contribute to prolonged sitting (Hamilton, Hamilton, & Zderic, 2007) and a lack of movement. Some research suggests that some leisure-time activities such as TV viewing and video games may encourage obesity both by displacing time that might be spent being physically active and exposing viewers to advertisements that encourage individuals and specifically children to eat high-calorie, low-nutrition foods (Henry & Kaiser Family Foundation, 2004). Additionally, some evidences suggest that increased amounts of time are devoted to sedentary behaviors (e.g., watching TV) and that this competes with PA during adolescents' leisure time (Koplan, Liverman, & Kraak, 2005).

From a public health perspective, PA is defined as any bodily movement produced by skeletal muscles that results in energy expenditure (Caspersen, Powell, & Christenson, 1985). Physical activity in daily life is comprised of different domains

(e.g., work, domestic, leisure) (Craig et al., 2003) or types (organized and non-organized physical activity) (Telama et al., 2005) and settings (e.g., home, playgrounds, schools) (Stratton & Leonard, 2002; Zask, van Beurden, Barnett, Brooks, & Dietrich, 2001). Despite these features that show the complexity of interpretation of PA, leisure-time physical activity (LTPA) has been seen as one of the most important dimensions of overall physical activity. For instance, it was shown that the time after school hours accounted for the highest levels of PA participation (Mota, Santos, Guerra, Ribeiro, & Duarte, 2003; Trost, Pate, Freedson, Sallis, & Taylor, 2000). Likewise, a review of 127 intervention studies (Dishman & Buckworth, 1996) showed that increasing LTPA was the goal with the highest effect size (0.85) in order to promote PA. In two recent studies, we have shown that outside of school PA was a key point for girls' moderate-to-vigorous physical activity (MVPA) engagement (Mota, Silva et al., 2008). Further, our own data suggests a gender-specific LTPA-obesity relationship. In fact, we found in boys but not in girls that BMI was lowered as the participation in PA outside the school increased (Mota, Ribeiro, Carvalho, Santos, & Martins, 2010). Additionally, involvement in community sports programs has been found to account for 55–65% of children's MVPA (Katzmarzyk & Malina, 1998). However, it is well documented that gender is an important determinant in PA participation (Sallis, Prochaska, & Taylor, 2000) and that there is a decline over the years (van Mechelen, Twisk, Post, Snel, & Kemper, 2000).

Despite the fact that gender differences in PA and sport participation have diminished over the past few decades (Telama, Naul, Nupponen, Rychtecky, & Voulle, 2002), differences and values associated with lifestyles continue to exist between boys and girls (Vilhjalmsson & Kristjansdottir, 2003). A long research tradition established gender differences (Vilhjalmsson & Thorlindsson, 1998) that may carry forward to adolescents' choices about how they spend time out of school. The key point in long-term achievements and lifestyle promotion is to establish how youngsters and adults can be influenced toward establishing regular PA as a habit, for example, understanding the factors that influence exercise adoption affecting PA behaviors in the long term (Epstein & Roemmich, 2001). For instance, the movement out of high school is characterized by many life transitions that may influence health behaviors. As a matter of fact, from childhood to adolescence and from adolescence to adulthood, there are several life adaptations, not only from a biological point of view but also from a psychological and social standpoint (Aaron, Storti, Robertson, Kriska, & LaPorte, 2002).

Within this chapter, the authors will make an overview about the relationship between PA patterns during leisure and the contribution it makes to health. First, we will analyze the health-related physical activity through the individuals' choices made during leisure and determine how these active choices might be helpful for health and how they can be affected by several factors such as gender, socioeconomic status (SES), and PA type and intensity. Then, we will analyze how cultural and environmental (context) determinants may act to enhance or diminish the PA opportunities over years. Finally, we will look to the future to discuss about the PA as a behavioral choice based on educational factors and the importance of school and school physical education as a key feature of leisure education.

Correlates of Leisure-Time Physical Activity (LTPA)

Leisure-time physical activity is considered the PA that is carried outside of the time of work (school) and essential domestic activity. From a public health point of view, it is important to transform these periods (after school hours) as an opportunity to engage youth in PA behaviors as well as to direct and design motivating, socially stimulating, and enjoyable PA programs. Children develop their preferences and decide to engage or avoid participating in PA depending on the extent to which the characteristics of activity are appealing to them (Chen & Zhu, 2005). Therefore, creating positive experiences and opportunities for activity might be critical for participation in PA during leisure time.

Some PA characteristics such as type of PA undertaken (organized [OPA] vs. non-organized [NOPA]) might be associated with different correlates (Giles-Corti, Timperio, Bull, & Pikora, 2005). One important gap in this field is the study of behavioral context, which relates to the setting in which the behavior takes place (Giles-Corti et al.), for example, depending on location, psychosocial and environmental correlates explained between 15 and 55% of the variance in PA (Ommundsen, Klasson-Heggebo, & Anderssen, 2006). Participation in NOPA and OPA is also an important issue since both types of participation predicts PA in adulthood (Telama, Nupponen, Piéron, 2005 & Yang, Telama, Laakso, Viikari, 2003). Some studies showed that OPA was more important among the more active groups in both boys and girls (Mota & Esculcas, 2002), with others suggesting that overweight and obese adolescents were less likely to take part in OPA than those of normal weight, though there were no differences in participation in NOPA (Santos, Oliveira, Ribeiro, & Mota, 2009). Additionally, OPA tends to persist into adulthood among some European (Telama & Yang, 2000; van Mechelen et al., 2000) and American (Aaron et al., 2002) adolescents. However, NOPA choices seem to be related to low PA intensity (Mota & Esculcas) and to lower socioeconomic levels (Raudsepp, 2006; Santos, Esculcas, & Mota, 2004).

The current PA guidelines recommend 1 h or more of daily physical activity for youth and 30 min for adults as well as the elderly. Most of the time should be spent in either moderate- or vigorous-intensity aerobic activities and should also include muscle- and bone-strengthening activities. PA intensity is an issue that should be addressed, since daily PA might be accrued through organized activities (Mota et al., 2010). Indeed, longitudinal studies showed that the decline in physical activity participation is greater in high-intensity activities and in NOPA activities (Telama & Yang, 2000). Additionally, some reports suggested that formal activities (organized) lead to a more physically active youth, while unstructured activities are likely to be more related to obesity (Santos et al., 2004). Also, early-life participation in sports and other types of PA is linked to continued participation in those specific activities during late adolescence (Pate, Ward, O'Neill, & Dowda, 2007).

An additional and valuable contribution of PA during leisure time is associated with its role as a social activity. More active boys and girls were more involved in those activities (socializing activities) during their leisure time (Mota et al., 2008). This is a very interesting finding because it is well-known that leisure-time activities

provide enriching opportunities for children to interact with peers (Telama et al., 2005). These findings agree with data suggesting that more active boys were more likely to have more active friends (Sallis, Alcaraz, McKenzie, & Hovell, 1999). Thus, LTPA might also provide an opportunity to develop social interaction with peers whom have been reported as the most important socialization agents during adolescence (Anderssen & Wold, 1992). It might be possible that those involved in more social activities would receive direct encouragement to engage in physical activities through their peer interactions, which in turn might support a higher level of physical activity (Mota, Santos, & Ribeiro, 2008).

In regard to leisure activities and/or choices, PA is influenced by different factors such as socioeconomic status (Owen, Humpel, Leslie, Bauman, & Sallis, 2004). Indeed, SES is an important determinant of health and well-being, because it influences people's attitudes, experiences, and exposure to several health risk factors (Huurre et al., 2003). Additionally, several studies have shown that low-socioeconomic characteristics and exposures during childhood are related to a variety of chronic diseases and all-cause mortality in adults (Cohen et al., 2010). For example, the number of physically active persons increases according to the level of family SES (Sallis, Zakarian, Hovell, & Hofstetter, 1996). Successful persons with higher education respond best to advice and recommendations for a healthy lifestyle. Although some studies showed that there was weak influence of parental SES on the adolescents' physical activity (Trost et al., 2003), a higher income and higher educational level coincide with more explicit ideas about how useful PA is during leisure time (Zinnecker, 1995). Usually high occupation level is associated with higher incomes, which in turn has been shown to coincide with positive attitudes toward physical activity during leisure time (Bois, Sarrazin, Brustad, Trouilloud, & Cury, 2005) and higher physical activity levels (Gordon-Larsen, McMurray, & Popkin, 2000; Mota, Gomes, Almeida, Ribeiro, & Santos, 2007). A recent review showed that 58% of the studies included on that report pointed out that adolescents with a higher SES are more physically active than those with a lower SES (Stalsberg & Pedersen, 2010). Adolescents from low-income families have limited access to those resources that can support physical activity, such as access to formal leisure physical activity clubs (Kantomaa, Tammelin, Näyhä, & Taanila, 2007; Sallis et al., 1996). The parent's occupation is associated with PA during leisure and may be related to either encouragement of activity (Vilhjalmsson & Thorlindsson, 1998) or providing transportation to facilities such as sports clubs (Hoefer, McKenzie, Sallis, Marshall, & Conway, 2001) or even providing financial support for equipment (Raudsepp, 2006). In this case, it is also possible that a different parent-gender role mediates the relationship between SES and LTPA (Davison, Cutting, & Birch, 2003). Usually, the mothers played a more instrumental role in their children's recreational activities than the fathers (Aaron et al., 1993). Furthermore, they are more prone and more involved in adolescents' LTPA (Mota, Gomes, Almeida, Ribeiro, & Santos). Thus, given the relationship between levels of PA and some health outcomes such as obesity, this association might be stronger in groups with lower education levels as well as in girls (Drenowatz et al., 2010; Sturm, 2008). Therefore, those findings are of particular importance for strategies and interventions tailoring lower SES background communities and/or girls.

Nonetheless, the time spent in inactive pursuits may be just as important as time spent in PA (Biddle, Gorely, Marshall, Murdey, & Cameron, 2004). Therefore, it is worthy to consider the interrelationships between different leisure-time activities in youth, as it contributes to understanding how and in what context and with whom young people spend their leisure time, and how this might be related to PA involvement as well as some health outcomes. For instance, it was suggested that TV viewing and video games may encourage obesity both by displacing time that might be spent in physical activity and through exposure to advertisements that encourage children to eat high-calorie, low-nutrition foods (Henry & Kaiser Family Foundation, 2004). Moreover, the independent effect of different media-based screen time use, such as video games, computer use, or TV watching, has also been suggested. For example, TV viewing, but not computer use, was a significant predictor of engagement in PA during leisure (Mota, Gomes, Almeida, Ribeiro, Santos, 2007). In another study, Strauss, Rodzilsky, Burack, and Colin (2001) reported that TV and computer activities might independently correlate with moderate activity levels. Indeed, it seems that adolescents can be interested in playing with a computer as well as being active in sports. The time spent working on the computer, but not the time on computer for recreational purposes (Feldman, Barnett, Shrier, Rossignol, & Abenhaim, 2003) or general computer use, (Santos, Gomes, & Mota, 2005) was positively associated with PA. A possible implication from some of those outcomes is that TV viewing leads to a more sustainable lack of PA. This reinforces the suggestions that different sedentary behaviors, such as computer use or TV viewing, are important in their own right, and stresses the idea that active adolescents might be more prone to better manage their leisure time (Feldman et al.).

Leisure-Time Physical Activity and the Built Environment

There is a growing recognition that the environment influences health behavior. An environment that encourages excess energy intake and reduced energy expenditure is widely considered to be a driving force behind population-wide weight gain (Dannenberg, Burton, & Jackson, 2004). As a matter of fact, built environments that facilitate more active lifestyles and reduce barriers to PA are desirable. Indeed, one important aspect of the environment's role is the way in which environments, neighborhoods, and communities are designed to promote or discourage the opportunity to be active (Handy, Boarnet, Ewing, & Killingsworth, 2002). For example, the availability of outdoor play spaces such as parks and playgrounds may be especially important because the time spent outdoors is strongly correlated with PA (Tudor-Locke, Ainsworth, & Popkin, 2001). Recent studies showed some significant associations between obesity and environmental characteristics (Timperio, Salmon, Telford, & Crawford, 2005) as well as between environment and youth's PA (Duncan, Spence, & Mummery, 2005; Timperio et al., 2006). Our own data showed that girls who perceived a better environment aesthetics neighborhood (OR 1.59) were more likely to be active during leisure time, while girls who reported more concerns with a lack of personal safety were more likely to be non-active

(Mota et al., 2007). Other studies suggested that adolescent girls were less active outdoors when they lived in high-crime neighborhoods (Gomez, Johnson, Selva, & Sallis, 2004; Gordon-Larsen et al., 2000). Among urban students, it was shown that children living in a safe neighborhood were physically active for extra 49 min longer than those living in an unsafe neighborhood (Molnar, Gortmaker, Bull, & Buka, 2004). Furthermore, a recent study determined that children who rarely played outside due to safety concerns were at higher risk for obesity (Lumeng, Appugliese, Cabral, Bradley, & Zuckerman, 2006). Thus, safety may be an important determinant of children's and adolescents' behavior (Timperio, Crawford, Telford, & Salmon, 2004) especially for girls. Improving roads and pedestrian features in neighborhoods and/or perceptions of road safety may be important components of strategies for increasing LTPA (Timperio, Crawford et al.). Other findings also suggest the importance of accessibility and distance to recreation facilities (Mota, Almeida, Santos, & Ribeiro, 2005; Sallis et al., 1990). Furthermore, environmental characteristics might play a different role according to the PA characteristics, for example, non-organized or organized ones (Mota, Almeida, Santos, Ribeiro, & Santos, 2009). This is noteworthy, because it has been pointed out that it is important to study the specific behavior related to the environment rather than a general behavior (Sallis et al., 2000). Indeed, we did not find significant associations between environmental characteristics and organized PA, but there were several significant associations with non-organized PA in adolescents (Mota, Almeida et al.). This reinforces the idea that specific behavioral contexts might be associated with different environmental variables, which was already shown in studies with adults (Humpel et al., 2004). For instance, our findings showed that different dimensions of environmental variables such as accessibility to facilities, aesthetics, and connectivity of the street network; infrastructures for walking and cycling; and recreation facilities were associated to girls' non-organized PA participation (Mota, Ribeiro, & Santos, 2009). In fact, our data are in accordance with several studies showing that different environmental features, such as the number of infrastructures and sports facilities in the area, were positively associated with more daily physically active individuals, especially girls (Brodersen, Steptoe, Williamson, & Wardle, 2005), and with walking (Hume, Salmon, & Ball, 2005). Both factors are to some extent location specific (Ommundsen et al., 2006), which is an important issue with regard to LTPA. For instance, a recent review showed that people in active-friendly environments are more likely to be physically active in their leisure time (Owen et al., 2004). Therefore, the location of home in relation to sport and PA facilities and living environment, in general, influences PA and sport participation (Yang, Telama, Laakso, & Viikari, 2003).

In summary, the physical environment, particularly the place where people live, presents a set of features and characteristics that have been studied and discussed as potential barriers or facilitators to the practice of physical activity or sports (Owen et al., 2004). The neighborhood is considered a key item in the examination of outdoor physical practices, offering the opportunity for non-expressive forms of PA such as walking and riding a bicycle (Carver, Timperio, & Crawford, 2008). Indeed, creating social support and providing PA facilities within neighborhoods, particularly

in low-SES neighborhoods, is desirable, because the existence of good places to spend the free time is associated with an important stimulus for PA (Molnar et al., 2004; Romero, 2005). Nonetheless, the specificity of the type of practice and its associated environmental variables should continue to be studied in order to manage the definition of specific guidelines for each context (Loureiro, Matos, Santos, Mota, & Diniz, 2010) in order to promote healthy lifestyle choices and active leisure opportunities.

Leisure-Time Physical Activity and Physical Education Enrollment

Creating positive experiences and opportunities for PA in schools might be critical for future participation in PA. An important aim of the schools, through physical education (PE), is to help youngsters to adopt physically active leisure lifestyles. Even nongovernmental organizations such as the World Health Organization (WHO) identify schools as one of the most cost-effective investments a state or nation can make to improve education and health simultaneously (WHO, 2004).

PE is in a uniquely favorable way to increase physical activity and fitness for children, as it has the potential to promote active lifestyles as well as teaching general movement and behavioral skills (McKenzie & Lounsberry, 2009). Although the importance of leisure time has increased, schools have a strong influence on the use of time and on the life of many young people (Strong et al., 2005). Despite the fact that leisure time is a key issue with regard to social activities in which youngsters take part, schools still offer a context for developing social relationships that can be attained through sports and PA. For many children, school physical education classes are the only outlet for them to exercise and to gain the benefits of physical activity. The National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Gordon-Larsen et al., 2000) showed that students enrolled in PE were more likely to perform at higher levels of weekly moderate-to-vigorous physical activity. Pate, Dowda, O'Neill, and Ward (2007) also found that adolescents in the USA who participated in PE classes reported a higher overall physical activity levels. Tassitano and colleagues (2010) reported that US students attending two classes per week had a 27% higher probability of being classified as physically active according to the current international guidelines, by comparison to students not enrolled. Participation in school PA is particularly relevant for students from low-income families or those who have lower educational levels, who are at greater risk of inactivity and being overweight (Gordon-Larsen et al.) and who may be less likely to participate in organized physical activity during leisure throughout childhood and adolescence (Findlay et al., 2009).

Physical activity during school hours may also play a key role in developing positive exercise behavior patterns in children. School's PA and PE need to be improved to encourage children to engage in substantial amounts of physical activity inside and outside of school. Indeed, four essential characteristics must be assigned to school programs: (1) they should include culturally relevant activities and low-cost

resources; (2) they should emphasize enjoyable, easy-to-implement activities; (3) physical education should include health promotion components in the curriculum; and (4) activities should be easily maintained (after the intervention period) and possible to disseminate to other schools.

Despite a scarcity of evidence of the interrelationship between PE participation and LTPA levels in adolescent's subgroups, intervention studies have demonstrated that the school environment and PE classes are promising contexts in which to promote physical activity among youth (Hoehner et al., 2008). Results of an intervention study carried out in two Brazilian contrasting cities (Florianopolis and Recife) showed that the control group reported significantly fewer days per week accumulating 60 min of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity (MVPA) compared to their experimental peers group. Furthermore, the prevalence of inactivity rose in the control and decreased in the intervention group (de Barros et al., 2009). Moreover, youth's leisure-time choices are influenced by different factors, where fun, challenge, and perception of competence are required to promote healthy and active lifestyles (Trudeau & Shephard, 2008). The available research on this subject seems to point to a lack of adjustment in the proposals submitted by the school during adolescence and the type of activities to which they adhere outside school. Therefore, appropriate strategies might be targeted for individuals, varying in activity levels, especially those with little or no regular participation. In such cases, it is expected that these school activities may contribute to proper emotional behavior of young people during leisure time, encouraging and modeling, therefore providing an understanding of physical activity as a value to be preserved within a system of values (McKenzie & Lounsberry, 2009).

Concluding Remarks

Social changes from rural to industrial society and from industrial to postindustrial or the modern age have drastically changed the lifestyle of society (Eaton & Eaton, 2003). The decrease of the physical work, the increased value of scholarship, the improvement in the quality of life, and the time spent in leisure activities are some of the factors that have impacted the PA of the citizens in the developed countries (Owen et al., 2004). Actually, there has been an increase in the physical inactivity and sedentary behavior, which has impacted the level of health, the quality of life, and the autonomous function of the population, which have caused major public health problems in the twenty-first century (Owen, Healy, Matthews, & Dunstan, 2010).

Evidence indicates that what an individual does during leisure time might affect illness, disease, and even longevity (Leitzmann et al., 2007). Researchers have shown that adequate participation in regular physical activity during adolescence might be of critical importance for the prevention of chronic diseases in adulthood (Katzmarzyk, Church, Craig, & Bouchard, 2009). Beyond physiological benefits, regular PA might also contribute to psychological and social benefits (Burton, Pakenham, & Brown, 2009). The promotion of physical activity/exercise needs to

be more pronounced. Enjoyment and happiness are two main issues that physical activity and exercise programs should address no matter what the age group or setting is (Piqueras, Kuhne, Vera-Villarroel, van Straten, & Cuijpers, 2011). As a matter of fact, long-term engagement in exercise and/or behavioral change is meaningless without a consistent motivational environment focusing on creating *autonomy-supportive* interventions (Silva et al., 2011).

Leisure-time experiences seem, therefore, important in the development of programs that challenge young people to test their skills individually and externally. Challenges that require their involvement, commitment, and occupation of free time activities and structured programs with meaningful experiences provide foundations for extending such experiences to all of life (Lloyd & Auld, 2002). Quantitative research clearly demonstrates that the behavior of individuals is influenced not only by objective experience but also by the perception of these experiments, although cultural context plays an important role in such perceptions (Iwasaki, 2007).

Physical activity can be embedded in a pedagogical model ensuring a sense of autonomy and personal responsibility. Hence, the sport and/or PA may be a health project at the time that is associated with the qualitative level of the subject's life by reference to their autonomy and responsibility. Additionally, it must be highlighted the idea that the social activities are extremely important in adolescents' leisure time. The idea that is established in the context of leisure time/activities is the role of physical activity in improving the person's quality of life (QOL). Indeed, while biological parameters have long been associated with PA and exercise, their role in well-being and quality of life should not be considered negligible. The major feature of the QOL concept is its multidimensional nature. In its conceptualization normally come dimensions such as cognitive, emotional and psychological, socialization, and other areas related to the perception of health and well-being (Goodman & Whitaker, 2002). There is accumulating evidence suggesting that positive well-being is associated with healthy behavior, lower delinquent activity, higher incomes, superior mental health, higher education, long life, better performance ratings at work, as well as an improved social and personal functioning (Burton et al., 2009). From this perspective, the QOL should consider an optimal relationship with the lived experience rather than objective factors such as activity or income or relatives' perspectives (Rejeski & Mihalko, 2001). Thus, leisure time is no longer restricted to discretionary time, but also becomes a marker of an individual's state of personal health and well-being. These findings should be considered in future strategic developments targeting physical activity enhancement. Indeed, intervention strategies should be developed to reinforce recreational opportunities to be active activities. A special focus should be placed upon partnership-based action to promote physical activity in a way that allows for success, fun, and the opportunity to socialize with others.

We cannot separate our life experiences from the biological and social aspects of the society in which we live. Hence, the social responsibility is to facilitate the training (of being active in sports) based upon an educational and a social project that includes the dimension of autonomy and responsibility. It is the person's responsibility to assume this sense of identity and lifestyle project. Additionally, one must be willing to extend his or her personal development as much as possible according to single interpretations of individual action; this is an important characteristic of

contemporary societies (Caldwell, 2005). Therefore, healthy living is not only associated with disease prevention but also helps people to develop a lifestyle that will maintain and enhance one's state of well-being. Leisure-time choices have a pronounced influence. By incorporating PA into leisure activities, people can counteract many of today's sedentary lifestyle-related noncommunicable diseases as well as enhance their health-related quality of life (HRQoL). In support of these points, it has been previously demonstrated (Leinonen, Heikkinen, & Jylha, 2001) that a positive association between PA and self-reported HRQoL exists among older adults. Rejeski and Mihalko (2001) concluded that PA might provide a global indicator of health and functioning through which deterioration in health and functional performance can be perceived and reflected in everyday life. That is why leisure education can have a significant effect on active leisure participation and life satisfaction. In this regard, the development of both social and physical environments that encourage and support active living is an important consideration (Sallis & Owen, 1999).

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Chapter 10
Bringing Leisure in: The Benefits and Importance of Leisure to Non-resident Fatherhood and Parent-Child Contact

John M. Jenkins

Introduction

> I think any involvement you can have with their life at all is obviously going to be a bonus, being there for their presentation night or their dancing show or whatever it is that they're doing…. [Non-resident Father 1]
>
> I feel happy. I feel really happy when I'm playing with my kids. I feel really good when I'm actually playing with them. When they leave I get a bit upset. I really do, I really miss them. I wish I had them all the time … I love playing with them and love having them. [Non-resident Father 2]

The above quotes are extracts from interviews conducted as part of a recent Australian study of non-resident fathers' leisure with their children (see Jenkins, 2006a, 2006b, 2009). This is an important area of research because in many countries increasing numbers of divorce, de facto separation and non-marital childbirth are among a number of factors that have led to more and more fathers not sharing the same home address with their children (Jenkins & Lyons, 2006). Despite increasing evidence that fathers can be central to their children's education, health and well-being, and that for many non-resident fathers contact with their children is important and highly desirable but inadequate, research on non-resident fathers, fathering, fatherhood and family dynamics as aspects of contemporary western society and family life is lacking (e.g. Kay, 2006a; Marsiglio, Amato, Day, & Lamb, 2000; Rosenberg & Wilcox, 2006). Being a father is already very complicated, and the concept of fathering is being increasingly complicated by a range of factors. These factors include changing family structures and patterns (e.g. increasing numbers of working mothers); changes in how societies conceptualise fathering and fatherhood;

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the widely varying expectations of fathers particularly with respect to work, play and their relationships with their families; increasing family diversity; and the growing numbers of non-resident fathers (e.g. Cabrera, Tamis-LeMonda, Bradley, Hofferth, & Lamb, 2000; deVaus, 2004; Smyth, 2004a, 2004b, 2005a, 2005b).

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) *Survey of Family Characteristics* (2008), in Australia, there are almost 400,000 non-resident fathers, fathers with at least one natural child who is aged 17 years or under and who resides elsewhere. Of these non-resident fathers, approximately 36% live alone, 31% have repartnered and live with their partner in a family household with children and 18% have repartnered and live with their partner but without children (ABS, 2008). The ABS also reported that there were approximately one million children aged 0–17 years (or about 22% of children in this age group) who had a natural parent living elsewhere. In 82% of cases, the children did not live with their father, and most (about 75%) of these children lived in one parent families, 12% in step families and 10% in blended families. This broad overview, however, hides some even more worrying family trends. For example, the ABS data reveals that of these children aged 17 years or less, approximately 28% saw their non-resident parent less than once a year or never and 47% never stayed overnight with that parent. Moreover, less than half of the children (43%) saw their non-resident parent at least once per fortnight, and only 4% actually spent half their nights or more per year living with that other parent. Leisure is an important avenue for fathers to spend quality time with their children (Caruana & Ferro, 2004), but separation and divorce often leads to a decline in leisure satisfaction for some family members (Zabriskie & McCormick, 2003).

This chapter reviews research on non-resident fathers and fatherhood. First, it discusses the incidence of divorce, de facto separation and non-marital childbirth in Australia and other westernised states and how this has led to a significant number of fathers living separately from their children. Secondly, it explains that for many non-resident fathers contact with their children is highly desirable but inadequate. Thirdly, it reveals that father involvement is important to children's education, health and well-being, but often only if, for example, some important family dynamics such as developing a positive or non-conflictual relationship with the children's mother and the nurturing and supporting of children are integrated (e.g. Allen & Daly, 2007; Rosenberg & Wilcox, 2006). Finally, with reference to a recent Australian case study, this chapter explains how leisure and recreation are important aspects of many non-resident parents' engagement with their children and important and positive means for them to reassert themselves as good, nurturing and supportive fathers.

Negative stereotypes, including the derogatory label 'Disneyland dad' (e.g., Shulman, n.d.; Women's Divorce.com, n.d.), for example, have been applied to non-resident fathers. Among other things, this Disneyland stereotype implies that some fathers attempt to buy the love of their children and that their time spent with children is mainly dedicated to having fun without the constraints of school and homework (Jenkins & Lyons, 2006). Other labels include 'missing in action' (Stewart, 1999). Stereotyping of non-resident fathers in these ways implies that the absence and sporadic leisure-based and indulgent interactions of non-resident fathers are products of individual choice (Stewart, 1999; Braver et al., 2005). However, Lamb (in Rosenberg & Wilcox, 2006: 13) contradicts these images, asserting, for example, 'Our research

really bashes the stereotype of the low-income father. These fathers care about their kids, but may not show their love in conventional ways and sometimes lack of a job, poor communication with the mom, or even their own childhood experiences can prevent them from getting involved'. Stereotyping also trivialises, for example, the leisure interactions of non-resident fathers and fails to consider that these leisure interactions are often shaped by legislation, family structures and a range of other variables that may act as constraints to fathers' engagement with their children (Green, 1998; Greif, 1995).

Jenkins and Lyons (2006) described the significance of leisure in non-resident fathers' engagement with their children and the lack of substantive research in this area. They explained how until recently leisure in this important context has been unnecessarily and unreasonably trivialised, and highlighted how there are in fact significant benefits that arise from family leisure-based interactions. For the purpose of this chapter, leisure (and recreation) is considered an important part of people's lives (e.g. Chubb & Chubb, 1981; Lynch & Veal, 1996; Mercer, 1980; Patmore, 1983; Van Lier & Taylor, 1993; Walmsley & Jenkins, 2003) and a rewarding form of human experience (Kraus, 1984; Lynch & Veal, 1996). 'Leisure is important to personal development, and viewed holistically, it 'brings a degree of balance to spirit, mind, and body…' (Walmsley & Jenkins, 2003: 279). Although leisure 'means different things to different people', the relaxation people experience during leisure, for example, may be central to reducing stress in daily living. Indeed for some people, leisure might be just as important as work, with 'discrete periods of time given to leisure each and every day. For others, leisure time is hard to find amidst work (including the journey to work) and the pressures of day-to-day life' (Pigram & Jenkins, 2006: 2). Some sections of the following literature review on 'family separation and divorce' and 'father involvement and the importance of leisure', draw substantially from Jenkins & Lyons (2006) and Jenkins (2006b).

Family Separation and Divorce: Background and Overview

Most research on family separation and divorce has centred mainly on deficit assumptions (or negative impacts), and on the interpretations and impacts of legislation and law on family circumstances, and particularly as to how mothers and children were affected by separation and divorce (Hawthorne, 2005; Smyth, 2004a, 2005a). Much less research has considered fathers and the dynamics of fatherhood, the importance of non-resident fathers to family functioning and children's development through positive engagement with their children, and the effects of separation and divorce on fathers and their relationships with their children (Blankenhorn, 1995; Gibson, 1992; Rosenberg & Wilcox, 2006; Smyth, 2004a, 2004b, 2005a, 2005b), although there is a growing body of international and local knowledge that brings separation, divorce, fathering and fatherhood into much a sharper and deeper focus (Allen & Daly, 2007; Amato, 2001; Amato & Gilbreth, 1999; Hawthorne, 2005; Kay, 2006a, 2006b; Pruett, 2000; Rettig & Leichtentritt, 2001; Smyth, 2004a, 2004b, 2005a, 2005b).

In Australia, the public policy focus on fathers and fatherhood is gathering momentum. Amendments to the *Family Law Act 1975* in the *Family Law Amendment (Shared Parental Responsibility) Bill 2006* (Commonwealth of Australia, 2006), informed by the Report on the Inquiry into Child Custody Arrangements in the Event of Family Separation (Commonwealth of Australia, 2003), give priority to encouraging shared parental responsibility. They promote the positive involvement by both fathers and mothers in the lives of children; include the presumption of joint parental responsibility, except in cases involving child abuse or violence; and consider the interests of children and their opportunities to spend time with their relatives, including grandparents. This legislative action was a major shift which has brought about greater consideration of the interests of both parents and the child(ren), and the Commonwealth government has vigorously argued that these reforms would also help promote the best interests of children. As McIntosh and Chisolm (2007: 9) pointed out, 'the principle that the child's best interests must be treated as paramount… was repeatedly emphasised in the background papers to the amending Act of 2006', and for which Section 60CA provides. There is nonetheless speculation about how the 2006 legislation would impact on affected families and whether it could cope with enormous diversity in separated families and conceptualisations of parenting. It was argued that changes to family law and child support would likely prove problematic in many cases (e.g. Flood, 2003, 2006).

It was widely argued that the 2006 amendments would encourage the courts to consider sharing parenting time in appropriate cases and would encourage parents to consider substantially sharing parenting time when negotiating parenting plans (for a detailed discussion, see Kaspiew et al., 2009). The Commonwealth government did roll out a suite of interrelated and supportive reforms, including the establishment of 65 family relationship centres across Australia and changes to criteria for assessing child support payments since July 2006. And the government very explicitly sought to promote and support cooperative parenting rather than the pursuit of litigation in family matters (Kaspiew et al.).

In their very detailed *Evaluation of the 2006 family law reforms*, Kaspiew et al. (2009) reported that parents overwhelmingly supported the philosophy of shared parental responsibility (involvement in decision-making about a child's development and welfare) but did not understand that shared parental responsibility would not necessarily lead to shared care (50:50 time spent with the child). Some fathers became disillusioned to 'find that the law does not provide for 50-50 custody' (p. E3), but the changes 'encouraged more creativity in making arrangements that involve fathers in children's everyday routines, as well as special activities in arrangements made either by negotiation or litigation', and led to an increased proportion of these arrangements being made. Importantly, the report also found that 'The majority of parents with shared care-time arrangements thought that the arrangements were working well both for parents and the child … [and] Generally, shared care time did not appear to have a negative impact on the wellbeing of children except where mothers had safety concerns…' (p. E3). In brief, McIntosh and Chisolm (2007) in their review of recent data

endorse the findings of earlier studies and 'suggest that shared physical care is an arrangement best determined by the capacity of parents to exercise maturity, to manage their conflict and to move beyond egocentric decision-making in order to adequately embrace the changing developmental needs of their children' (p. 14). In discussing their findings with a prominent researcher (Bruce Smyth, whose work is cited in this chapter), they further indicate that 'the capacity of parents for "passive cooperation" and the containment of acrimony may prove to be central benchmarks' (p. 14). [Similar issues were raised in a broader scoping study and manual produced in the United States (Rosenberg & Wilcox, 2006)].

Prior to the 2006 legislative amendments, several models of non-resident parent-child contact were applied through courts of law or used by parents (see Smyth, 2004b, 2005a). The most widely applied models were summarised by Smyth (2004b) (see Table 10.1). The extent to which each of these models will become more or less prominent (or others evolve) under the 2006 legislative reforms is not yet known, though there are indications that they are slowly promoting increased father engagement (Kaspiew et al., 2009). That said, although the extent of contact between children and non-resident fathers is receiving greater attention and is encouraged by the recent amendments and supporting policies and programmes, we still lack a clear picture of the quality of non-resident fathers' engagement with their children and the associated roles of and intersects between fathers' work, leisure and other aspects of time use (e.g. Jenkins, 2006a; Jenkins & Lyons, 2006; Smyth, 2004a). We also lack a sophisticated understanding of the factors that make involvement of fathers in decision-making and shared parenting more likely. These situations mean that it will be difficult to develop policy settings which truly support the intent of recent legislative amendments and which truly support shared (50:50) care. Although the statistics show some slight variations, Weston et al.'s (2002, pp. 18–19 in Flood, 2006: unpaginated) comments remain salient; 'the culture of fatherhood has changed much faster than the conduct. Fathers share physical care of children equally in only 1–2 per cent of families, and are highly involved in day-to-day care in only 5–10 per cent of families'.

The former Department of Family and Community Services (DFaCS, 1999; also in Sullivan, 2001) highlighted the challenge of being a father. Perhaps more pointedly, the 'definition of "father", like most aspects of fathering, is contested – on theoretical, pragmatic, and moral and ethical grounds' (Sullivan, 2001: 46), and there is a justified concern that changes to the social constructs of fatherhood and fathering reveal 'extensive ambiguity and confusion' (Hawthorne, 2005; also see Flood, 2003). Given the diversity in separated families, these observations concerning the ambiguities of fathering and fatherhood have some resonance with Harrington's (2006: 424) discussion in which she argues that 'Kelly's (1995) reformulation of leisure as "interaction environment" … would open up the field to study leisure within other intimate communities, including those most marginalised from mainstream research; for example, gay and lesbian people, migrants and refugees, street children and other homeless people'. Indeed, important social relationships and phenomena are revealed by the social analysis of leisure (Rojek, 2005).

Table 10.1 Models of non-resident parent-child contact

Contact Model	Characteristics
Fifty-fifty care	Care equally shared among parents (seven days and nights with each parent in a fortnight period). Children can be close to both parents, but such arrangements are criticised because of the lack of stability as children move between two homes and possibilities for children to be exposed to conflicts between parents, neglect and mental health problems
Little or no contact	Very common model. Many variables influence disengagement, including fathers not wanting to see their children because they feel the children have turned against them, strained relationships with the mother, work engagements, substance abuse, distance, children growing older, feelings of inadequacy, role ambiguity, and fathers failing to cope emotionally and psychologically with divorce
Holiday-only contact	Often arises when one parent relocates a considerable distance from the other parent and his/her child(ren). Problems arise in that contact often becomes less and less frequent and may eventually cease. Or the nature of contact becomes such that children are often, if not always, in a 'school-free zone' and when the father may in fact be taking time off work
Daytime-only contact	Children do not stay overnight. They and their non-resident parent may have limited opportunities to experience some important family activities such as reading before bed-time; eating night-time and morning meals together; dressing and cleaning the house together
The standard contact	Non-resident parents see their children every alternate weekend and half the school holidays. It is a common model, perhaps the most common in Australia and overseas (Ferro, 2004). There are a number of possible explanations for the evolution and widespread application of this model. These reasons concern 'traditional sex roles and work patterns' (Smyth, 2004b: 88). Non-resident fathers may continue in their 'traditional roles', working during the week and seeing children on weekends. While some fathers would like to see their children on every weekend, in an increasingly widespread situation where mothers are working, mothers too reserve a right to see their children on weekends (Ferro)

Source: Smyth (2004b)

Father Involvement and the Importance of Leisure

Many non-resident fathers struggle to first establish, let alone maintain, what they and others might regard as a normal parent-child relationship (Parkinson & Smyth, 2003, 2004; Smyth, 2005b). This situation has been attributed to their inability to

spend time with their children on a daily basis (Bailey, 2002; Smyth, 2004a, 2005b), their lack of involvement in day-to-day decision-making (Bailey, 2002; Green, 1998; McMurray & Blackmore, 1993; Smyth, 2005a) and lack of information about their children's activities and progress at school (Bailey, 2002; Amato, 2001; Wallerstein, 2001), and the fact that they may no longer be regarded as a family member (Bailey, 2002; Green, 1998). Other reasons for fathers failing to establish or maintain regular contact with their children post-separation include the following: fathers may be marginalised if they believe their worth to children's lives is undermined by courts, counsellors or the children's mother; fathers simply do not care and refuse to support their children; fathers cannot afford to support their children and subsequently withdraw; fathers are rejected by the children or others; fathers give up if they feel incompetent or find contact difficult; the geographical distance between fathers and their children is great; either of the parents repartners; and conflict between the parents is apparent to the children (Jenkins & Lyons, 2006, p. 224; Allen & Daly, 2007; Green, 1998; Smyth, 2004a, 2005a, 2005b).

International research on fathers and fatherhood has demonstrated that fathers have important influences on their children (Allen & Daly, 2007; Green, 1998; Lamb, 1997, 2000; Menning, 2002; Pleck & Masciadrelli, 2004; Pruett, 2000; Rosenberg & Wilcox, 2006). Demographic and family circumstances, socioeconomic resources, and the nature and quality of father-child interaction have consequences for children's well being, cognitive development, social competence and academic achievement, and their educational and occupational attainments as adults (Hernandez & Brandon, 2002; Menning, 2002). Jackson (1999) and Dunn, Cheng, O'Connor, and Bridges (2004) highlighted the importance of fathers in the lives of children and adolescents, as well as the direct, inverse relationship between the extent and quality of contact between father and child and the extent and nature of behavioural problems. While there are cases in which children who grow up without fathers do well or where contact with their father places children at risk of harm, children who grow up without a committed and involved father are more likely to suffer disadvantage and lower levels of well-being (Horn & Sylvester, 2002).

The quality or nature of the time non-resident fathers and children spend together is not determined exclusively by the amount and timing of their contact. What fathers actually do with their children is important (Amato & Gilbreth, 1999; Green, 1998), and for many non-resident fathers (perhaps especially so for those with standard, holiday only or little contact) a good deal of the time spent with their children may well be leisure-oriented and recreational (Smyth, 2004a, 2004b), but shaped quite significantly by work and other commitments or constraints (Jenkins & Lyons, 2006).

Research reveals that parents make valuable contributions to children's cognitive, social and emotional development when they share leisure time, and for fathers, playing with their children is 'particularly important in forging a secure parent-child relationship' (Brown, Michelson, Halle, & Moore, 2001, pp. 1–2; Mactavish & Schleien, 1998). To date, however, examinations of father-child play interactions

have failed to adequately analyse 'how the restricted and unique characteristics associated with being a non-resident father may impact activities, attitudes, perceptions and meanings for the parents and children involved' (Jenkins & Lyons, 2006, p. 227).

Research on leisure and families has been directed mainly to such matters as marital leisure patterns, with involvement in leisure and recreation activities linked to factors such as joint leisure experiences, family bonding and strength (e.g. Hawks, 1991). Shaw and Dawson's (2001) work on constraints suggests that families sometimes see family recreation as a form of purposive leisure. For instance, family-based recreation could improve communication, bonding, health and fitness, and give parents opportunities to express particular values, interests and world views (see Jenkins & Lyons, 2006, pp. 226–227). Leisure and families is a neglected aspect of leisure studies (e.g. Jenkins & Lyons, 2006; Kelly, 1997; Shaw & Dawson, 2001), and the traditional two-parent family has been the focus of a good deal of attention with respect to parent-child leisure interactions, while wider recognition is gradually being given to leisure in non-traditional families such as lone parent, blended, and same-sex-couple households.

There is growing evidence that leisure and recreation are important and positive aspects of many non-resident parents' interactions with their children. Stewart's (1999) research in the United States indicates that most non-resident parents' primary interactions with their children actually take place in leisure contexts. These interactions were linked to a variety of factors affecting the role of the noncustodial parent. Woods's (1999) interviews with 252 non-resident parents revealed that 94% of respondents provided recreation and entertainment activities involving a 'significant cost' during contact visits. Of those who provided recreation and entertainment activities, 55% said that 'it helped to build the relationship with the children' (p. 28) (also see Jenkins & Lyons, 2006, p. 227).

Strong relationships among family members are vital to children's and parent's happiness, health and well-being and can be supported by leisure together (Brown et al., 2001; Halle, Moore, Greene, & LeMenestrel, 1998). Family bonding, compatibility and strength can be promoted by engagement in leisure activities by families (Crawford, Houts, Huston, & George, 2002; Hawks, 1991; Mactavish & Schleien, 1998; Orthner & Mancini, 1991). Leisure can lead to better mental and physical health and health maintenance, personal development, greater appreciation of self, positive changes in mood, social and cultural and other benefits, and increased overall quality of life and well-being (Driver & Burns, 1999; Driver, Brown, & Peterson, 1991; Haworth, 1997; Orthner & Mancini, 1991). The relative freedom experienced within a leisure context actually affords non-resident fathers opportunities to spend quality time with their children, engaging in a range of mutually beneficial activities (e.g. Caruana & Ferro, 2004; Kazura, 2000). It is also within the context of leisure that the constraints associated with matters such as limited and affordable contact are likely to be a reality, and the responsibilities and commitments set by individuals, families, communities and the law are often negotiated (see Jenkins & Lyons, 2006, pp. 225–226).

What Non-resident Fathers Do with Their Children: A Case Study of Leisure with Their Children [1]

Methodology

Much is to be gained from talking to fathers in a variety of personal and family circumstances, but it is difficult to recruit fathers for research projects, and this has been especially the case for non-resident fathers (Smyth, 2004a). As Smyth (2004a, p. 21) notes, despite the fact that women and men have different attitudes, perceptions and recollections of events and issues, 'Much of what we know about separated/divorced fathers in Australia comes from talking with mothers'. Marsiglio (1995) made similar observations but reported that the collection of data directly from fathers was rising.

Non-resident fathers residing in the Hunter Region of Australia were recruited in a nonrandom purposive manner. A sample of self-selected separated fathers was recruited. Referral sampling was also used. Semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with 18 non-resident fathers from September 2005 to February 2006 at a location of their choice. Most interviews were conducted at the fathers' homes or at a university office. Interviews were taped and transcribed, and transcripts were de-identified. In the analysis and findings, only pseudonyms are used.

Fathers were asked questions about their personal details including date and place of birth, education, income, payment of child support, employment status, their work commitments, where they lived, how long they had been separated and their relationship with their children's mother. Fathers were also asked to describe their children, their relationships with their children and their children's living arrangements. Other questions were directed to fathers' living arrangements and marital status, their child-contact arrangements, their perceptions of how their children felt about contact with them and fathers' willingness and ability to spend time with their children. These ideas provided a context for exploring non-resident fathers' leisure, and additional questions were asked such as the following: What do you hope to see come from your leisure with your children? Are these hopes or aspirations met? Are any activities with your children more important to you than others? Fathers discussed ways of reducing barriers and constraints to leisure with their children as well as other forms of contact such as speaking on the telephone, writing e-mails, cards and letters, and sending mobile phone text messages.

The 18 fathers ranged in age from 29 to 57 and their average age was 46 years. One father was born in New Zealand and the rest in Australia. Educational attainment ranged from completion of Year 10 (or equivalent) schooling to undergraduate university degrees.

[1] The methodology for the case study is described in more detail in Jenkins (2006b, 2009).

Discussion

The original results of this research (e.g. see Jenkins, 2009) presented four key themes grounded in data arising from interviews with fathers: the effects of experiences of separation and divorce on fathers' life circumstances, lack of time and time pressure, leisure meanings and activities, and fathers' aspirations for and experiences of leisure with their children. These themes provided a framework for analysing non-resident fathers' leisure with their children. The following discussion briefly focuses on elements of each overlapping theme, but draws particular attention to two interrelated themes: time and time pressure; and leisure meanings, activities and experiences. These are themes which help display the importance of leisure to non-resident fathers' engagement with their children and highlight the relevance of the social analysis of leisure (Rojek, 2005) in the context of non-resident fatherhood. As mentioned above, all data has been de-identified and pseudonyms have been used.

Fathers perceived leisure differently, but it appeared no less important to them and their engagement with their children. Zac, Trevor and Walter's definitions or perceptions of leisure were closely related to conventional notions of free or unconstrained (non-work) time:

> Leisure according to the dictionary means an opportunity to do, or afforded by free time, time at one's own disposal. And I think it is the substance of what we're talking about, this free time; these opportunities we have with our kids that makes all the difference… This leisure is vital to the healthy interaction between parents and children. So, leisure to me was just going swimming and activities, and it's partly that but it's more than that. It's that opportunity to have that free time with each other that isn't constrained. Unconstrained time. And that's something that I believe the children and the dads, and the mums too, are entitled to have with each other. [Zac]
>
> Something that you enjoy that's not work … for the purposes of leisure activity with your kids some sort of bonding activity that encourages growth. [Trevor]
>
> Leisure to me is time away from work … walking for me is a real buzz. I used to do a bit of swimming … Even just lying there with a few beers with different people. Family time as well, you know barbeques, bits and pieces. Boat[ing], make that into a family day, invite all the kids down and have the boat for half an hour if they've got it. I really enjoy it. Leisure for me, I'm a realist and I think I've only got 10 years ahead with these kids to really have some impact…. [Walter]

Among the fathers, leisure with their children involved a wide variety of activities – water sports such as skiing, surfing and swimming; cycling; walking; camping; long drives; building sand castles and playing in the sand at the beach; kicking the footballs; and playing cricket. These are active leisure pursuits frequently linked to fathers' engagement with their children in intact families (Jenkins & Lyons, 2006). However, passive and educational leisure pursuits, less often associated with fathering, were also commonly referred to by interviewees – arts, crafts, drawing and reading; playing board and computer games. For the majority of fathers, common activities such as watching television and videos/DVDs were prevalent. Perhaps unsurprisingly, other activities such as home renovations and working on the property, mowing the lawn

or even doing household chores with children appear to have taken on a leisure dimension for some fathers. Several fathers recounted the 'pleasures' of doing household renovations with their children, cleaning, washing up and child care around the home.

As Kelly and Lamb (2000) argued, for non-resident fathers to be fully integrated in their children's lives, they need to participate in a range of everyday activities that allow them to function as parents rather than as regular visitors. Overnight visits and time spent reading, washing up, doing homework, talking and cuddling assist fathers to be relevant to children's socialisation and development. Thus, the timing, length, nature and quality of contact are all critical factors in fathers' leisure with their children. Regardless of the level of child support paid by the father, the financial costs of leisure were considered by fathers to be substantial, especially in providing for particular activities, maintaining diversity in activities, acquiring good equipment and catering to changing tastes that arise in and among children over time. Some fathers thought they perhaps made time and space for leisure during contact with their children to an extent they may not have done before separation.

Most fathers experienced a form of time stress or pressure, especially if more than one child was involved and especially where those children either varied with age or were of different sex. The problem was compounded by infrequent (e.g. daytime only or holiday only) contact. Stanley, for example, described his experiences of a weekend with four children saying it was 'impossible' to adequately accommodate their needs. He then elaborated:

> That's what I miss, you know it's alright to have the weekend and you know you're a Disneyland dad, and all you do is muck around with the kids. Well, I'd rather have the kids during the week. What I miss with my kids is talking about how they went at school, helping with their homework, helping with school projects, discussing other kids in the class. And you lose all that. All you get is, you go to dad for fun time and it is… dad's try to jam 14 days of life with their kids into 2 days. You hear these women saying 'he just spoils him rotten and takes him to McDonalds and does this and that'. And I say, 'well, who wouldn't? If you had someone, who, when they're born, you basically dedicate your life to them and then suddenly you can only see them a couple of days a fortnight, of course you're going to!' The couple of dollars a week you've got left you're going to spend it all on your kids. [Stanley]

After deducting child support, reestablishment costs and maintaining contact with his children, it was apparent Stanley's intent in his expenditure on his children was not an effort to 'buy love' but an outcome of having little discretionary income and an acknowledgement of the significance of contact to him and his children.

In the course of discussions, fathers were asked what aspirations they had in engaging in leisure with their children; what did they hope to gain from leisure activities with their children? Many responses centred on developing a relationship with their children:

> Just a very loving relationship – a very loving relationship. [Gareth]
>
> The only thing I hope for them is that they have a good connection with me as their father, so whatever they choose and what ever direction they go I just want to support them. I think that's important. Very, very important. [Callan]

Leisure is a very central part of family life for intact and separated families. However, it takes markedly different forms and is a very important means for non-resident fathers who have little and highly regulated contact (e.g. daytime-only or weekend-only contact) to make a valuable contribution as parents to the lives of their children. As Frank put it so succinctly, 'I feel that I'm cheated in many ways because of the lack of time I get with the kids… I suppose I have been talking about some of the barriers/constraints I experience with the boys. The biggest barrier is time, of course' [Frank].

Several fathers described flexibility in their work arrangements that were vital to facilitating contact with their children:

> I'm very lucky that my hours of work are like 9.00 [am] to 3.30 [pm]… I've got a lot of flexibility in that compared to normal people's work hours…. [Gareth]
>
> Flexibility and me being self employed is fairly important… I maintain approximately 20% to see my children; about 20% of the year… so that's about 75 days. So when I'm with my children I'm with them all the time. So that's a big commitment. And I can only do that if I work for myself. Noone is going to give me a job where I have 75 days off a year. So I realised that pretty quick. [Callan]
>
> I had to work every second weekend; well I was supposed to work nearly all weekends, but I organized to have every second weekend. [Stanley]

Some fathers made changes to their workplace arrangements to find time to see their children. One father described how he worked long hours between school holidays in order to make time to travel interstate to visit his children:

> I had between 12 and 14 weeks off a year with my work and all of every school holidays … No normal person takes 14 weeks a year off. I couldn't care less about what normal people do. This is my relationship with my children and I'm trying to do the best that I can to maintain that and get it to a stage where they can ring me up any time they want whatever their need is and say hey dad I need to talk to you about this. [Joseph]

Even among this small sample of non-resident fathers, it was evident that fathers facilitated contact with their children in many different ways – changing from full-time-paid employment to self-employment, limiting their hours of work, changing occupations and rearranging work/shift schedules. However, not all fathers were able to change their work patterns. Casual employment, working nights, being on call and lack of predictable work arrangements made it very difficult for some fathers. One father who had repartnered worked between two or three casual jobs simultaneously while studying full time. Two fathers emphasised their valuable relationship with their work supervisor who allowed them to alter work hours to help them see their children. As Wilbur put it:

> Well, my employer is XXX. And strictly speaking they don't have a system for father's type things. But my boss is a top bloke and we get on really well and I do over hours and he understands that. He says any time you need time to go and see your kids or do whatever it is you've got to do, just go. [Wilbur]

Flexible arrangements were vital to Wilbur. His contact with his children had a 3-week cycle, in which although he saw his children every week, the extent of contact varied in each of the 3 weeks.

Conclusions

Family diversity needs to be better reflected in leisure research. Families affected by separation and divorce are one case in point. Non-resident fathers have important influences on their children, but spending time with their children presents a considerable hurdle for many of them. Leisure, widely considered free time, varies among families in context, setting, form and extent, and indeed in a family over time, and is far from trivial. However, leisure is a vital, qualitative aspect of many non-resident fathers' contact and engagement with their children. Nevertheless, for non-resident fathers to be fully integrated in their children's lives, they need to participate in a range of everyday activities that allow them to function as parents rather than as regular visitors. To develop and refine recent policies and programmes that support the goal of promoting fathers' involvement in the lives of children, it is essential to understand the extent and nature of fathers' current participation and involvement and how these are linked to the social, economic and demographic characteristics of fathers and their families.

Although this study does not use a representative sample of non-resident fathers which allows for generalisations, it does suggest the need for research concerning non-resident fathers' time use and indicates that policy and legislation promoting fathers' roles in supporting and caring for their children is outpacing social and workplace arrangements that might better facilitate such roles. Widespread (traditional) family and societal models of fatherhood are somewhat out of step with the recent 2006 policy and legislative developments, wherein, for example, non-resident fathers need support to develop and maintain strong relationships with their children, while formal and flexible workplace arrangements that facilitate these outcomes are inadequate and ad hoc. In this context, the social context for leisure proves to be a very fertile field of inquiry which can uncover, important and inform us about many aspects of contemporary family life.

The benefits of leisure to family relationships and family members' well-being are very evident in this study. Leisure is an important part of non-resident fathers' engagement with their children, and leisure supports non-resident fathers' parenting. Through leisure, fathers can help build relationships with their children. Children and fathers benefit from positive leisure experiences.

A better picture of the extent of non-resident father-child contact is being unpacked by researchers in leisure studies and other fields. However, we still do not know enough about how non-resident fathers use their time and what they do with their children during contact and with what effects both with respect to the fathers, the children and their wider families, including the children's mother. Among many research gaps that could be fruitfully explored, there remains a very urgent need to better understand the supports and interventions required by non-fathers, living in vastly different circumstances and with varying levels of contact and contact arrangements, to enable participation in paid work, fulfilling leisure and positive involvement in the lives of their children. We might also usefully explore how fathers negotiate constraints to leisure with their children, children's own perspectives

of leisure with their non-resident parents, the extent to which fathers' leisure with their children is influenced by how those fathers experienced leisure with their own parents and whether, in fact, non-resident fathers actually experience leisure in very different or similar ways to resident dads. This is not only an important area of study, but, to paraphrase Rojek (2005), a very rich one for leisure studies grounded in the analysis of social relationships and phenomena.

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Chapter 11
Happiness Through Leisure

Jeroen Nawijn and Ruut Veenhoven

Introduction

Happiness is important to individuals. If one were to make a judgment based on the vast amount of self-help books available in any bookstore, the conclusion would have to be that happiness is a very important aspect of people's lives. Whether such books actually provide any solutions to increase happiness is doubtful (Bergsma, 2008). Nevertheless, many are clearly interested in happiness.

Contemplations about happiness began hundreds of years ago. Particularly, the ancient Greeks were interested in happiness, among which Aristotle. Aristotle thought of happiness as "living according to reason." In his view, leading a happy life meant leading a virtuous life (McMahon, 2006).

Since the 1960s, happiness has become a subject of empirical research in the social sciences. The concept of happiness in these empirical studies is different from Aristotle's view. Rather than leading a morally *good* life, happiness is regarded as leading a *satisfying* life. In this chapter, we focus on that latter meaning of the word.

Happiness trainings have also developed since the 1960s. Recently, interventionists and researchers joined forces in the positive psychology movement, which aims to strengthen individuals' life skills, enabling them to lead happier lives. This is mainly done through positive interventions, some of which are more successful than others (cf., Seligman, Steen, Park, & Peterson, 2005). Another strand in this movement focuses not so much on training and soul searching, but gathers objective information on determinants of happiness, with the purpose of enabling people to

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make better informed choices, that is, minimize discrepancies between expected and experienced utility (Kahneman, Wakker, & Sarin, 1997). This chapter fits the latter strand.

Striving for happiness is not futile; apart from feeling good, being happy has several other advantages as well. One benefit is that happiness lengthens life (Danner, Snowdon, & Friesen, 2001), because happiness protects against becoming ill (Veenhoven, 2008). Longitudinal studies also found that happiness fosters intimate relationships and adds to productivity at work in various ways (Lyubomirsky & King, 2005).

In this chapter, we discuss the relation between happiness and leisure. First, the concepts of leisure and happiness are defined. Next, we explain how leisure can affect happiness and whether it has a positive influence on happiness. We end this chapter with an agenda for future research.

Leisure

We identify leisure as free time which is defined as "time away from unpleasant obligation" (Stebbins, 2001, p. 4). Stebbins distinguishes three types of leisure: serious leisure, casual leisure, and project-based leisure. Serious leisure constitutes three kinds: career volunteering, hobbyist activities, or amateur pursuits. Casual leisure is less substantial and offers no "leisure career." Project-based leisure is free time dedicated to a leisure project. This type of leisure is short in nature, unlike a hobby. The research presented in this chapter addresses mostly the domain of casual leisure, which is "immediately, intrinsically rewarding, relatively short-lived pleasurable activity requiring little or no special training to enjoy it" (Stebbins, p. 53).

In this chapter, we also address the role of tourism (i.e., leisure travel). Tourism and leisure are not separate fields of study. Like leisure, tourism is also considered as a time free from (unpleasant) obligations. The significant difference however is that tourism takes place outside one's normal environment; it includes at least one overnight stay elsewhere (UNWTO, 1995). Leisure and tourism can be conceptualized in such a way that a synthesized behavioral understanding of the two disciplines can be conceived (Moore, Cushman, & Simmons, 1995). In fact, tourism may be regarded as a specific form of leisure as the distinction between tourism and everyday life (i.e., leisure and work) is not as apparent as it perhaps once was; tourism has very much become an integral part of life (Larsen, 2008; McCabe, 2002). For instance, experiences that were once confined solely to tourism are now accessible in everyday life (Lash & Urry, 1994). Tourism is also becoming increasingly more important; the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) reports an average long-term growth rate of 4% in international tourist arrivals and predicts 1.6 billion international arrivals by the year 2020 (UNWTO, 2008). These numbers exclude domestic trips, which outnumber international trips by more than a factor of five (Peeters & Dubois, 2010).

Happiness

People use a variety of words to describe how well they are doing or feeling. Commonly used terms are "well-being," "quality of life," or "happiness." All of these have different – but sometimes partly overlapping – meanings. Veenhoven (2000) proposed a classification based on two bipartitions; life "chances" and life "results" versus "outer" and "inner" qualities (see Scheme 11.1).

Meanings of the Word

The upper half of Scheme 11.1 presents two variants of potential quality of life. The outer qualities address the opportunities in one's environment, whereas the inner qualities refer to the ability to exploit these. Veenhoven denotes the environmental chances by the term "livability" and the personal capacities by "life-ability." *Livability of the environment* represents good living conditions. Quality of life, well-being, and welfare are commonly used terms for this top-left part of the quadrant. According to Veenhoven (2000, p. 6), "'[l]ivability' is a better word, because it refers explicitly to a characteristic of the environment and does not have the limited connotation of material conditions." *Life-ability of the person* denotes how well individuals are equipped to cope with their life. Besides being referred to as well-being or quality of life, this top-right quadrant of Scheme 11.1 is also denoted as adaptive potential, health, efficacy, or potency. Life-ability is the main focus of positive psychological interventions.

The lower half of Scheme 11.1 addresses the quality of life with respect to its outcomes. Veenhoven named the external worth of life as "utility of life," whereas the inner valuation is termed "appreciation of life." *Utility of life* presumes higher values; it "represents the notion that a good life must be good for something more than itself" (Veenhoven, 2000, p. 7). *Appreciation of life* is about the inner outcomes of life, by which is meant the subjective appreciation of life. This has also been referred to as subjective well-being, life satisfaction, and happiness.

The main focus of current happiness research, and therefore this chapter, is on life satisfaction, which is defined as "the overall appreciation of one's life as-a-whole" (Veenhoven, 1984). Four kinds of satisfaction can be distinguished (see Scheme 11.2).

Scheme 11.1 The four qualities of life

	Outer qualities	Inner qualities
Life chances	Livability of the environment	Life-ability of the person
Life results	Utility of life	Satisfaction with life

Veenhoven (2000)

Scheme 11.2 The four kinds of satisfaction

	Passing	Enduring
Part of life	Pleasure	Part satisfaction
Life as-a-whole	Peak experience	Life satisfaction

Veenhoven (2010a)

Kinds of Satisfaction

The word "satisfaction" is used with differing meanings. The fourfold taxonomy presented in Scheme 11.2 helps us understand these differences. A passing satisfaction addressing a part of life is what we call a *pleasure*, for instance, the enjoyment derived from reading a good book or drinking a cold glass of beer. An enduring kind of satisfaction related to a part of one's life is referred to as a *part satisfaction*, which can be satisfaction with a "domain" of life, such as leisure, or an "aspect" of life, such as the variety. A passing kind of satisfaction relating to one's life as-a-whole is a poetic or religious type of extasis, an intense experience, which is called *peak experience*. Finally, life satisfaction (or happiness) is an enduring kind of satisfaction with life as-a-whole (Veenhoven, 2010a). The kinds of satisfaction addressed in this chapter are enduring kinds of satisfaction: part satisfaction (i.e., leisure satisfaction) and life satisfaction.

Components of Happiness

When estimating their satisfaction with life as-a-whole, people draw on two sources of information: how well they feel most of the time and to what extent their life meets their wants. Veenhoven (2009) refers to these appraisals as, respectively, the "affective" and "cognitive" components of happiness and considers these as subtotals in the inclusive evaluation of life, which he calls "overall happiness." These appraisals do not necessarily coincide. For instance, one can feel good most on the time but still judge that life falls short of one's aspirations.

Feelings, in terms of emotions, affect, and mood, belong to the affective component of happiness, called *hedonic level of affect*. Contentment is the term used to describe the cognitive component of happiness. *Contentment* designates "the degree to which an individual perceives that his aspirations are being met" (Veenhoven, 1984, p. 27).

In this chapter, we will address both overall happiness and the affective component (i.e., hedonic level of affect). We will not deal with the cognitive component of happiness because its relation with leisure has not been assessed empirically as of yet.

Measures of Happiness

Over the years, various methods of assessing happiness have been applied. According to Layard (2005), the most "objective" method of measuring happiness is by means of a brain scan. For rather obvious reasons, this is not a very useful method. Since happiness is something we have in mind, it can also be measured using self-reports.

Self-report questionnaires or diary studies are often used in empirical studies on happiness. An example of the latter is the experience sampling method (Csikszentmihalyi & Larson, 1987), which is a method where participants are "beeped" on a PDA or cell phone and are asked to record where they are, what they are doing, and how they feel at multiple moments throughout a day, an ideal method to assess optimal experiences. An alternative form of a diary study is the day reconstruction method (DRM; Kahneman, Krueger, Schkade, Schwarz, & Stone, 2004), in which respondents assess the previous day in its entirety. The most commonly used, however, are self-report questionnaires which may use single-item questions (Abdel-Khalek, 2006) or a variety of scales to assess happiness, such as the Positive And Negative Affect Scale (PANAS; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988), the Subjective Happiness Scale (SHS; Lyubomirsky & Lepper, 1999), or the Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS; Pavot & Diener, 1993). The PANAS and DRM measure the affective component of life satisfaction, whereas the SHS and SWLS are overall measures of happiness. The responses to self-report questions on happiness are generally prompt, nonresponse is low, and temporal stability is high (Veenhoven, 1984, 1991b).

Can Leisure Affect Happiness?

Some theories argue that happiness cannot be changed. For instance, *homeostatic set point theory* or *trait theory* argues that happiness is a rather stable "trait" and that whatever we do, we cannot change our happiness. In this view, particular experiences can at best provide a temporary uplift, after which we return to our set point (Cummins, 2005), and in that view, leisure will not make us any happier.

How about the reality value of this theory? One implication is that happiness remains about the same over the span of one's life. This theory is partly based on Lykken and Tellegen's (1996) findings on heredity of personality traits, which are indeed quite stable, particularly after the age of 30 (Costa & McCrae, 1994). Yet happiness appears to be a "state" rather than a "trait." A research synthesis by Veenhoven (1994) showed that happiness is stable in the short run, but not over the lifetime. Furthermore, happiness is not insensitive to fortune or adversity, and the genetic base of happiness is modest at best. More recently, Headey (2008, 2010) showed that set point theory overstates the stability of happiness; some groups of

people at least experience substantial permanent upward or downward changes in life satisfaction.

Comparison theory is a cognitive theory of happiness and holds that we base our happiness on the estimation of the gap between the realities of our lives and common standards of the good. Standards of comparison are deemed variable rather than fixed, and subjective evaluation of life is considered unrelated to the "objective" quality of life (Veenhoven & Ehrhardt, 1995). Comparison theory disregards the affective component (Veenhoven, 1991a; Veenhoven & Ehrhardt, 1995). Cross-national research has failed to find evidence supporting the assumptions of comparison theory (Veenhoven & Ehrhardt), whereas research between groups of individuals (happy versus unhappy) has found evidence that supports comparison theory (Lyubomirsky & Ross, 1997). Comparison theory allows for an effect of leisure on happiness. Leisure participation, the way one spends their leisure time, and the time which is available for leisure could be part of comparison between individuals or groups of individuals within a particular society.

Other cognitive happiness theories, such as *goal theory*, also imply that leisure can influence happiness. Consumer behavior is predominantly goal-directed. A goal focuses on a specific outcome, but is not limited to such an outcome. Goals also encompass experiences and sequences of events (Bagozzi & Dholakia, 1999). Several studies in the field of happiness have shown that the pursuit of personal goals and progress on (important) goals are strong predictors of happiness (Brunstein, 1993; Emmons, 1986, 1992; Omodei & Wearing, 1990; Palys & Little, 1983). However, people may adopt certain goals which are not congruent with their needs (Diener, 2000), striving for such goals will not increase happiness. Similarly, Kasser and Ryan (1993) found that happiness does not increase when people make progress on certain goals, such as "making money." Their interpretation is that certain goals meet intrinsic needs and those affect happiness, whereas others meet extrinsic needs and do not affect happiness. Additionally, McGregor and Little (1998) found that perceived efficacy is related to happiness. Low expectations of success are associated with negative affect (Emmons, 1986). Thus, in the case of leisure, striving for leisure goals which are congruent to an individual's needs and wants should increase happiness. Like other cognitive happiness theories, goal theory ignores the affective component of happiness.

Livability theory or *need* theory is an affective theory of happiness which posits that the subjective appreciation of life is based on the "objective" quality of life. Livability theory focuses on absolute quality of living conditions, whereas comparison theory focuses on the relative difference. Thus, according to livability theory, people are happier in good living conditions compared to bad living conditions, even if they know that others are better off (Veenhoven & Ehrhardt, 1995). This theory presumes that there are basic human needs and that happiness increases when these needs are met (Diener & Lucas, 2000). In this view, happiness mirrors the degree to which innate needs are met (Veenhoven, 2009). Cross-national research supports the assumptions of livability theory (Veenhoven & Ehrhardt), particularly the relation between economic growth and its influence on years lived happily (Veenhoven & Hagerty, 2006). In this view, leisure can contribute to happiness if it

is instrumental in meeting human needs. If so, people will be happier in societies that have cultivated leisure compared to societies that have not.

Diener and Lucas (2000) concluded that most of the aforementioned theories are not mutually exclusive and proposed an inclusive *evaluation theory,* which involves evaluating incoming information that is relevant to well-being. They argue that desires, goals, and needs are chronically salient standards and consequently have ongoing effects on happiness. Past comparison and social comparison are only relevant in evaluating one's happiness in specific circumstances.

Thus, from a theoretical perspective, there are several ways in which leisure may contribute to happiness of individuals. Comparing one's leisure time and activities to others who are better or off, or worse off, could affect happiness. Another possibility is to strive for goals, congruent with one's needs. Pursuit and progress on these personal goals would positively affect happiness. Finally, when basic human needs are met to a great extent, this may allow for more leisure time and opportunities to spend this time according to one's needs, which would be beneficial to individuals' happiness.

How Personality Influences Leisure and Happiness

According to Lyubomirsky, Sheldon, & Schkade (2005), approximately 50% of an individual's happiness is predetermined through heredity, 10% is determined by circumstances, and 40% is affected by intentional activity. The domain of leisure falls within the 40% of the happiness spectrum which is affected by intentional activity. The 50% set point probably reflects, to a large degree, personality traits (McCrae & John, 1992), which are highly heritable (Tellegen et al., 1988), although there is reason to believe that this genetic set point is likely to be lower than 50% (Headey, 2008, 2010).

The five-factor model of personality (FFM or Big 5) is a "hierarchical organization of personality traits in terms of five basic dimensions: extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness to experience" (McCrae & John, 1992, p. 175). Even though the model is widely accepted, there remain disputes over the amount of factors (too few or too many) and the best interpretation of the factors (Becker, 1999). Quite possibly, there are other dimensions of personality not covered in the FFM.

The five traits are heritable (25–45%; Larsen & Buss, 2002). The highest degree of heritability is associated with extraversion and neuroticism (McCrae & John, 1992). Personality influences relationships, goal striving, and life events. Costa and McCrae (1994) found that personality traits are relatively stable after the age of 30, which has been confirmed by others (Soldz & Vaillant, 1999). The role of extraversion in regard to happiness has been researched extensively (Argyle & Lu, 1990b; Diener, Larsen, & Emmons, 1984; Diener, Sandvik, Pavot, & Fujita, 1992; Moskowitz & Cote, 1995; Pavot, Diener, & Fujita, 1990). The presence of positive affect is predominantly related to extraversion (Rusting & Larsen, 1997). These studies

have concluded that extraverts are more sensitive to positive mood induction than introverts (Larsen & Ketelaar, 1991; Rusting & Larsen, 1997). Extraversion is related to positive affect through more indirect mechanisms (Argyle & Lu, 1990b; Pavot et al.), and extraverts are happier than introverts (Diener et al., 1992; Pavot et al.). Extraverts are more likely to be more involved with people and consequently have a greater circle of friends (Myers, 1993).

Personality traits not only influence happiness but also have an influence on how individuals make use of their leisure time (Hills & Argyle, 1998; Kraaykamp & Van Eijck, 2005; Melamed, Meir, & Samson, 1995). Kraaykamp and Van Eijck found that openness to experience has a positive effect on book reading and outdoor arts attendance. Openness to experience stimulates interest in complex and exciting recreational activities. Furthermore, they found that conscientiousness had a negative effect on participation in difficult or unconventional activities. Extraverts feel generally much better in high-stimulation situations. Although leisure situations are not necessarily more activating than work situations, extraverts tend to use their leisure time for more activating activities; extraversion is positively associated with leisure pursuits (Argyle & Lu, 1990a; Brandstätter, 1994; Hills & Argyle, 1998; Lu & Hu, 2005). Additionally, individuals who score high on extraversion have stronger social motives, which are more easily satisfied in leisure (Brandstätter, 1994). People who score high on extraversion and neuroticism also watch more TV soap operas (Hills & Argyle, 1998; Lu & Argyle, 1993).

As personality partially influences how leisure time is spent, it is important to find leisure activities which are congruent with one's personality (i.e., leisure congruence). Leisure congruence is found to be positively associated with work satisfaction and negatively with burnout and somatic complaints. Individuals who selected congruent leisure activities had higher work satisfaction (31%), higher self-esteem (20%), less burnout (21%), fewer somatic complaints (17%), and less anxiety (17%) compared to those who lacked leisure congruence (Melamed et al., 1995).

In sum, personality has an influence on how individuals allocate their leisure time, and personality also partly determines how happy individuals are. Even though personality traits are highly heritable, there are still many opportunities for individuals to affect their happiness by finding leisure activities which are congruent with their needs.

Research Findings on Leisure and Happiness

Although leisure has been a frequent subject of empirical research (Stebbins, 2001), the relation between leisure and happiness has not received much attention to date. The available research results have been gathered in the World Database of Happiness (Veenhoven, 2010d). All the literature on this subject can be found in its Bibliography of Happiness (Veenhoven, 2010b), subject section Happiness and Leisure (code Le). By the end of 2010, there were 100 publications in this category. Findings

yielded by studies that used acceptable measures of happiness are presented in the collection of correlational findings. One of the reports in this collection, "Happiness and Leisure" (code L3), contained 190 findings at the end of 2010 (Veenhoven, 2010c). We summarize the main findings in the following sections.

Work and Leisure

Work, leisure, and happiness are interrelated (Haworth, 1997). Leisure is used by individuals as an opportunity to cope with work stress (Trenberth, Dewe, & Walkey, 1999) and working conditions influence leisure satisfaction (Near, 1984). The passive aspects of leisure are well suited to cope with work stress (Trenberth et al.).

Loss of work is associated with lower life satisfaction as the unemployed are less happy than the employed (Böhnke & Kohler, 2008; Winkelmann & Winkelmann, 1998). Additionally, the unemployed are less happy about their home life (Fogarty, 1985), which is considered a part satisfaction (see Scheme 11.2). The effect of unemployment is three times stronger than that of bad health, and younger people are more strongly affected by unemployment (Winkelmann & Winkelmann).

Not only paid work is associated with happiness, volunteer work is associated with happiness as well (Boelhouwer & Stoop, 1999; Böhnke & Kohler, 2008; Thoits & Hewitt, 2001). Happy individuals are more active in volunteering and additionally, volunteering adds to their happiness. Thus, there is evidence that there exists a positive cycle of selection and social causation processes (Thoits & Hewitt). Whether self-selection or social selection is the predominant factor in choosing to engage in volunteer work is unclear . Thoits and Hewitt argue that in some circumstances, it is likely that both these processes occur. All the findings on work and leisure, except where indicated, are based on measures of overall life satisfaction (bottom-right quadrant of Scheme 11.2).

Leisure Activities

Leisure activities can be either passive or active. For instance, watching a sports game on TV would be considered passive participation, whereas participating in a sports game would be considered active participation. Leisure activities produce positive moods, and much of this derived pleasure stems from the social relationships that they foster (Hills & Argyle, 1998). Participation in social activities is associated positively with happiness (Ragheb, 1993), and frequency of participation in leisure activities is also associated with happiness (Baldwin & Tinsley, 1988; Dowall, Bolter, Flett, & Kammann, 1988; Lloyd & Auld, 2002; Wankel & Berger, 1990). However, participants are not necessarily happier overall compared to nonparticipants. Churchgoers are happier than those who do not attend religious services (Böhnke & Kohler, 2008), although the frequency of church visits is not associated with happiness (Nawijn & Veenhoven, 2011).

All the aforementioned findings are about overall life satisfaction. Flow is a state in which people are so involved in an activity that nothing else seems to matter (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). A state of flow could be regarded as a peak experience (bottom-left quadrant in Scheme 11.2). Research on flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975, 1990, 1998) finds that optimal experiences are most likely to occur during structured leisure activities and when reading (Della Fave & Massimini, 2003). Reading had been associated, in a positive way, with happiness by Ragheb (1993), but Nawijn and Veenhoven (2011) failed to find a significant association between frequency of reading and general life satisfaction. Watching TV generally relates negatively to overall happiness (Bruni & Stanca, 2006, 2008; Della Fave & Bassi, 2003; Frey, Benesch, & Strutzer, 2005). Still, TV watching is a source of pleasure (top-left quadrant in Scheme 11.2), though certainly not the most pleasurable activity. In their analysis of 21 different activities, Krueger et al. (2009) found that walking, making love, exercise, playing, and reading are the most enjoyed activities, in both their French and US samples. Least enjoyable activities were housework, travel, shopping, computer/email/Internet, taking care of one's children (only in US sample), commuting, and working. Serious leisure (Stebbins, 2007), in the form of hobbies, is deemed particularly important for happiness. The limited data available on this subject suggest that people who have a hobby are happier than those who do not (Boelhouwer & Stoop, 1999).

The way in which leisure activities influence happiness is related to age or certain cohorts. Being active in later life is positively associated with overall life satisfaction (Nimrod, 2007). Social activities and travel are associated with happiness for those aged 65–74. Those aged 75 or older are the happiest, spending time with family and doing home-based activities (Kelly, Steinkamp, & Kelly, 1987).

Leisure Travel

Holiday trips potentially add to individuals' happiness in several ways. Vacationing may have a direct effect on an individual's happiness by anticipating a trip, which would allow for increased hedonic level of affect. Similarly, savoring the holiday experience through memories may induce an "afterglow" effect, which could cause higher post-trip levels of hedonic affect. Finally, during the trip itself, people feel supposedly better than they do in everyday life.

Individuals may also benefit from vacationing in a more indirect way by benefiting from impressions or skills learned while on vacation, for instance, having learned a language, understanding a culture, or having made new friends. Recuperation is also deemed an important vacationing benefit.

Recent research has mostly supported the direct way in which vacationing adds to individuals' happiness (Boelhouwer & Stoop, 1999; De Bloom et al., 2010; Hagger, 2009; Nawijn, 2010; Nawijn, 2011b; Nawijn, Marchand, Veenhoven, & Vingerhoets,

2010). For instance, people who had recently had a holiday trip score higher on overall happiness than those who did not (Boelhouwer & Stoop, 1999), which supports the afterglow hypothesis. However, increased levels of post-trip happiness seem to be the exception rather than the rule. Only those who have a stress-free holiday benefit – in terms of hedonic level of affect – from such afterglow effects and only for 2 weeks (Nawijn et al.). Vacationers anticipating holidays strongly score higher in overall happiness and hedonic level of affect than those who anticipate holidays to a lesser extent (Hagger, 2009). Vacationers also experience higher levels of hedonic level of affect than non-vacationers several weeks before the trip starts (Nawijn et al.). While on holiday, vacationers are generally in a good mood (Nawijn, 2010), which is much better than their mood in everyday life (De Bloom et al.; Nawijn, 2011). The long-term effect of vacationing on overall happiness and hedonic level of effect is virtually nonexistent (Nawijn, 2011a).

Leisure Satisfaction

Ateca-Amestoy, Serrano-del-Rosal, & Vera-Toscano (2008, p. 65) define leisure satisfaction as follows (based on Beard and Ragheb (1980)): "positive perceptions or feelings that an individual forms, elicits, or gains as a result of engaging in leisure activities and choices. It is the degree to which one is presently content or pleased with one's general leisure experiences and situations. This positive feeling of pleasure results from the satisfaction of felt or unfelt needs of the individual." Satisfaction with leisure appears to be positively associated with happiness (Ateca-Amestoy, et al., 2008; Lloyd & Auld, 2002; Ragheb, 1993; Spiers & Walker, 2009).

Satisfaction of life domains correlates fairly strongly with life satisfaction (Ateca-Amestoy et al., 2008; Lloyd & Auld, 2002; Van Praag & Ferrer-i-Carbonell, 2004; Van Praag, Frijters, & Ferrer-i-Carbonell, 2003). Part satisfactions (see Scheme 11.2) of finance, health, job, and leisure are the four most important correlates with life satisfaction in Germany (Van Praag et al.). The strength of the effects varies among workers and nonworkers and between East and West Germany, with western nonworkers scoring highest.

Conclusion

Casual leisure and leisure travel typically provide temporary happiness boosts which are the strongest in the moment itself. In the case of leisure travel, vacationers are happier on holiday compared to everyday life. Little is known about project-based leisure and serious leisure; the limited data and theoretical assumptions suggest a positive effect on happiness.

Agenda for Future Research

Research in the relation between leisure and happiness is still in its infancy, and there is a dire need for future research. We present a brief overview of themes for further investigation.

Beyond Casual Leisure

The studies to date have focused mostly on what Stebbins (2001, 2007) refers to as *casual* leisure. Little or no research has been undertaken in the areas of *project-based* leisure and *serious* leisure. Within leisure travel research, the focus has been on the direct effects of vacationing, not on the possible indirect effects. Project-based leisure and serious leisure may add to happiness through goal striving. A hobby or a project seems particularly suited to work on goals. A project is essentially a goal in itself. On top of that, projects and serious leisure activities generally last longer than leisure travel or casual leisure. The outcome of future studies on project-based leisure and serious leisure and their effect on happiness could therefore be quite promising.

Specification

The question is not so much *whether* leisure adds to happiness, but *what kinds* of people benefit most from *what kinds* of leisure. Effects of leisure are probably not the same for the young and the old or for singles and couples. Specification is not only of interest to the leisure industry, but it is also in the interest of consumers. This kind of research requires large samples, and it is necessary that different populations are involved. In this context, we note that the available data mainly draw on samples in rich countries. Little is known about the importance of leisure and the allocation of free time in less developed countries and its relation to happiness.

Cause and Effect

Since most existing studies are cross-sectional, we are inadequately informed about causality. There is a dearth of research on the effects of happiness in leisure preferences and behavior, and we are also largely in the dark about causal mechanisms. Follow-up studies are needed for that purpose, preferably long-term follow-up studies that also involve personal characteristics, such as personality and health. Since such follow-up studies are very expensive, it is wise to join forces with existing panels, such as the German Socio-Economic Panel or the Happiness Monitor (Oerlemans, 2009).

Test of Theories

Lastly, happiness theories should be tested in a leisure context. Sirgy (2010) recently proposed a research agenda for goal striving in relation to leisure travel. The hypotheses that he proposed can be tested within other leisure domains as well. Additionally, comparison and need theories lend themselves for (further) testing in studies on leisure.

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Part IV
Leisure and the Pursuit of a Positive Leisure Science (PLS)

Chapter 12
Afterthoughts on Leisure and Future Research Directions

Teresa Freire and Linda L. Caldwell

The first main purpose of this book was to provide an overview of recent empirical and conceptual work on leisure and positive psychology. Overall, the chapters in this book provide an insightful and broad perspective of leisure across the lifespan and highlight new and emerging perspectives. At the end, our final aim is to articulate those perspectives around the importance of basic and applied research regarding positive leisure science (PLS). In this chapter, we will consider and discuss some of the conclusions that have emerged from this book. We choose those that, in particular, open new issues and directions to leisure future research.

In 2000 the *Journal of Leisure Research* published a special issue that invited numerous scholars, novice and veteran, to discuss issues related to the then past, present, and future of leisure studies. It is the hope that this volume of edited chapters continues that discussion and contributes new ideas and directions for the future that can encourage the emergence of new theoretical frameworks, methodologies, and practices about leisure.

This book was presented in three parts (besides this fourth part where this 12th chapter is included). In part one, authors discussed the central role and the impact of leisure in positive living, stressing the broad concepts of positiveness and lifespan; authors in part two considered the role and impact of leisure in positive human growth and development, and in part three, authors highlighted the role of leisure in the pursuit of well-being and quality of life across the developmental spectrum.

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Across the chapters, a diversity of perspectives and methodologies were evident, but all together they shared the conviction of the importance and usefulness of leisure as a main variable for the understanding of human development. A common thread across authors included the need to understand the best way of living through leisure, regardless (or because) of cultural features, individuality, and social structures or constraints. Each author focused on unique topics toward that common thread.

In the first part of the book, Robert Stebbins concluded that leisure is today's only "happy science." He went on to advocate for its importance both theoretically and practically in shedding light on, and offering services to facilitate, positive leisure science. Also in the first part, Douglas Kleiber discussed the process of reconstruction and how leisure is redeemed throughout life, with a focus on later life. He posited that the processes of engagement and disengagement are dialectally related to leisure, urging consideration of the possibilities afforded by societies for redeeming leisure in later life through three main processes: preretirement education, intergenerational civic engagement, and service tourism.

In the second part of the book, leisure was considered a main experience, activity, or context responsible for the emergence of a positive and worthy life. In this part, authors considered that leisure was associated with different concepts such as developmental assets and healthy life styles, identity, and cultural and individual meanings.

Focused on prevention and youth, Linda Caldwell and Monique Faulk highlighted the positive impact of leisure in preventing risk and promoting adolescents' health, well-being, and positive development. Their chapter addressed the paradox that leisure can be associated with both positive and negative outcomes for youth. They emphasized the need to analyze three related elements of leisure (experience, activity, and context) and to use these elements in leisure education interventions to reduce risky behavior and promote positive outcomes.

In a somewhat similar vein, a particular focus on leisure experience was contributed by Teresa Freire, who described how leisure subjective experience and identity developmental processes can combine to contribute to the positive and healthy development of adolescents. As for new challenges, she highlighted the use of leisure in daily life as a facilitator of adolescents' development and the need to articulate different theoretical perspectives to improve research as well as intervention aimed at promoting positive development.

From a more contextual point of view, Ramon Zabriskie and Tess Kay highlighted the impact of family context in the construction of a leisure lifestyle. Their model, which offers a framework within which the relationship between family functioning and family leisure can be scrutinized across different family types, is a challenge to developmental questions as well to intervention processes.

Finally, Marta Bassi and Antonella Delle Fave addressed context from a cultural perspective. They described the importance of exploring the developmental contexts of unstructured activities as opportunities for discovering new resources, discovering self-determining motives, and for finding new meanings in life. Bassi and Delle Fave underlined the need to design interventions to address psychological dependence on artifacts and externally structured environments, which characterize western societies.

In part three of the book, leisure was discussed as a source of well-being and quality of life across the developmental spectrum. In this part, authors touched upon

different domains of leisure such as therapeutic recreation, flow and quality of life, physical activity, children and fatherhood, and finally the broad concept of happiness. As in part two, a diversity of perspectives and methodologies was present, but all together these chapters identified the importance and usefulness of leisure as a main variable for the understanding of well-being.

The issue of recreation is considered in depth through the contribution of Colleen Hood and Cynthia Carruthers. These authors concluded that leisure is an important avenue to develop well-being. Their focus on practitioners included the use of the Leisure and Well-being Model (LWM), a model theoretically and empirically based, to provide direction to support individuals' engagement in leisure for facilitating well-being. Their interest in people with disabilities opened a diverse range of new challenges, both for research as well as for practice.

Kim Perkins and Jeanne Nakamura showed how flow experiences greatly enhance one's quality of life. Flow experiences in leisure develop skills and strengths differently from other experiences, contributing to enjoyment of life. These authors underscored how the particular characteristics of flow experiences need to be considered and how further research is needed to clarify how experiences or emotions shift within flow. Perkins and Nakamura suggested that the challenge for research is to study how leisure provides an excellent context for developing new findings regarding the dynamics of positive and negative factors in producing flow, in particular, and enriching experiences, in general.

A specific focus on health and physical exercise is provided in the chapter by Jorge Mota et al. They underlined the need for participation in regular physical activity during adolescence in order to prevent chronic diseases in adulthood. Their contributions provide new suggestions and challenges for the effective creation of recreational opportunities for active participation both for boys and girls. The role of social and environmental opportunities is highlighted in terms of future research.

John Jenkins focused on a specific population and relationship, analyzing children and fatherhood, and the role of leisure in the positive parenthood process of nonresident fathers. He described how leisure is an important area of research not only for a broad understanding of the relation between nonresident father-child contact but also a very rich area of study for leisure studies grounded in the analysis of social relationships.

Finally, Jeroen Nawijn and Ruut Veenhoven highlighted the relation between the two main broad concepts of happiness and leisure, showing how leisure is potentially very important to individuals' sense of well-being and how it can positively affect happiness. They suggested more research on project-based leisure and serious leisure would be important future directions. Furthermore, they suggested that research be conducted in different cultures and within countries' structures, in order to avoid standardized conclusions based on developed countries. They also highlighted leisure as a main context for testing the study of happiness and advocated for the usefulness of longitudinal methodologies to better disentangle the relation between leisure and happiness.

Having considered all authors' contributions and their commonalities with regard to a positive leisure science, we now would like to consider issues that in particular piqued our interest and motivated additional research questions beyond those explicitly addressed by chapter authors. These issues and ideas are at the margins of empirical

evidence and are, at this point, thought experiments to contribute to future research directions, defining the main issues for the positive leisure science perspective. We discuss these next.

The Relevance Question Again: Is Anybody Listening?

A decade ago, Shaw (2000) challenged leisure researchers to reflect on whether "we" only are talking to ourselves, and if so, why was no one else listening? We (Freire and Caldwell) give a cautious nod to some good movement in the right direction in terms of leisure researchers being "listened to" by non-leisure researchers. In increasing numbers, leisure scholars are publishing in non-leisure journals, and leisure scholars are being cited in other fields as well as being brought to the interdisciplinary table. The state of the art of leisure science as it exists today, however, still falls short of its potential contribution to the study of human-environment interaction. Henderson (2010) highlighted some approaches to move forward and prevent the decline of leisure studies in the twenty-first century. These approaches included embracing changes, articulating a collective identity, recognizing positive contributions of leisure, and identifying collaborations between researchers and practitioners across disciplines and professions. Acting on these approaches, in addition to others that we discuss, may entice others to listen.

Current perspectives on science and methodological advances challenge leisure scholars even further. Scientists from all disciplines work in an era where scientific fields and related boundaries are at the same time strictly defined and strongly interdependent. Being a multidisciplinary field by nature, leisure researchers have come to study leisure from various disciplinary perspectives, but it is rare that a true interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary approach is taken. This latter approach would undoubtedly contribute to leisure's relevance by unraveling how leisure is one of a complex set of variables and causal pathways to conditions of human existence. In her 2000 article, Shaw observed that perhaps the reason no one was listening was due to the lack of relevance of our work and implicated the "leisure as the dependent variable" problem.

Reflected in this series of chapters, leisure scientists are beginning to study leisure as the independent variable and more importantly, an interdependent variable. As an independent variable, leisure can be viewed as a potential predictor of a series of life outcomes, including both physical and emotional health, for example. As an interdependent variable, other questions such as how work/leisure balance affects different groups of people across the lifespan can be considered. We do not advocate an abduction of research on leisure as a dependent variable, but we do strongly encourage studies that are based on a broader interdisciplinary perspective.

Social ecological theory (e.g., Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998) is a grand theory that provides a conceptual framework for placing pieces of the human experience puzzle in an attempt to better understand correlational or causal mechanisms for human-environment interaction. Although it is extremely difficult to test the entire

framework due to its complexity, as methods and analytic tools become increasingly sophisticated, this theory takes on new importance for leisure scientists. Social ecological theory (SET) provides a framework to understand or model how leisure is woven in the fabric of daily existence by considering how individual characteristics (e.g., motives, values, attitudes, and neurological functioning) influence and are influenced by social relationships (e.g., parents, siblings, peers, and teachers), which influence and are influenced by environmental, social, political, and religious structures and norms (e.g., school, church, and cultural opportunities), which influence and are influenced by the broader culture and socioeconomic context. SET (and other similar grand theories) provides a platform for diverse research perspectives ranging from ethnographic research or developing grounded theories through qualitative methods to quantitative approaches. Moreover, this type of theory forces one to think about important interactions such as gene X environment or gender X culture or to study how one set of variables may mediate a relation of interest.

Leisure researchers cannot escape the lack of relevance issue unless we *engage fully* in interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary research where scientists from different disciplinary backgrounds, including leisure, work together to solve broader societal problems. Leisure researchers need to provide theoretical and empirical evidence that all facets of leisure (e.g., structural opportunities as well as leisure experiences) matter to human existence. The evidence must be compelling, be based on strong scientific principles and methods, locate how leisure is interwoven among and across all elements of daily life, and demonstrate how leisure is connected to broader individual or social issues. Focusing on things like poverty, social marginalization, addictions, or immigration rather than leisure itself provides a starting point for how positive leisure science can contribute to larger human-environment issues. In many countries, leisure service provision came into existence based on the need to solve social problems. Over time the field has become so theoretically and methodologically insular that leisure's relevance is at risk. Reconnecting with the pragmatic potential of leisure to improve social and individual conditions removes this risk.

The genesis of this book grew out of the desire to make leisure research relevant. Freire's desire to define the field as "positive leisure science" is in response to the need to recognize the enormous contributions already made as well as to encourage future contributions to enhance advances in psychology and other fields that focus on the positive rather than the negative.

The Concept of Leisure as Positive

Although it is easy to understand what leisure is from a common sense perspective, several difficulties emerge when trying to define it from a theoretical or scientific perspective. How to define leisure and in what extent it differs from other similar concepts is a crucial question. Although this is an ancient question, a clear answer does not exist yet. Across the chapters, the authors consensually lamented that,

historically, this is one of the weaknesses underlying leisure studies. Thus, the complexity of the concept is appreciated along with the incapacity for its clear operationalization.

One aspect related to the definition of the concept is the word used to name it. In particular the expression of "free time" has a historical weight that cannot be underestimated. As stated by Godbey (2000), in contemporary industrial societies, leisure was considered a social problem because of the increase of unobligated time in societies due to the decrease in hours worked. This time-filled, zero-sum perspective, however, begs the question of the qualitative aspect of time use. As we have seen in this book, free time can be filled in positive, healthy ways or in negative and unhealthy ways (individually as well as societally). Moreover, leisure as time to be filled seems to be incompatible with leisure as relaxation or contemplation. This makes the distinction between leisure and free time a must in conceptual leisure discussions because time is needed to have leisure but having time, *per se,* does not guarantee the perception of having or being in leisure.

Although leisure as monochromatic or sequential is the predominate view of time across many societies and cultures, particularly industrialized societies, it is also important to consider time as polychromic or synchronic, where life is experienced as in flux and fluid, and allows for a more organic person-time interactional perspective. This lack of rigidity allows for a more nuanced examination of doing more than one thing at a time or responding to the moment in a way that deepens or compresses time, for example. Although there is quite an active research group that focuses on time use, it appears that most research from this perspective has to do with monochromatic, sequential leisure. Positive leisure science may benefit as well as contribute to "time use" studies by more fully considering leisure as time. For example, the role of relaxation and contemplation may be better viewed from a more complete view of leisure as time.

As evidenced in the treatment of the concept leisure by authors in this book, the term leisure is philosophically and morally laden with meaning. In addition, leisure "time" or "experience" is something that ebbs and flows over the lifespan, and as such leisure may hold different meanings for people as they age from birth to death. Leisure is thus a cumulative dialectic from which a paradox and a conceptual challenge emerge. The clear conceptual dichotomy that exists in the literature might be described as two camps. One is that leisure is always positive, and if it is not, then that phenomenon being experienced is not leisure, but another kind of experience (e.g., someone who is in a golf foursome out of obligation but does not consider the experience at all enjoyable). In this camp, researchers consider that the subjective experiences associated with leisure are entirely positive. Indeed, the leisure literature generally twins leisure with goodness (e.g., Drozda, 2006; Rojek, 1999; Williams & Walker, 2006) or positiveness (Stebbins, 2009) or even with fulfillment and gratification.

Researchers from the other camp suggest that "in leisure" or "through leisure," individuals may engage in actions or have subjective experiences that may have detrimental consequences for them (i.e., acts of vandalism by youth who are motivated by boredom may be fun for them, but not considered as leisure by society).

Some scholars have termed these forms of "leisure" to be "purple recreation" (Curtis, 1979, 1988) or sub-zero on the Nash pyramid (Gunn & Caissie, 2006). There is clearly an interest among leisure scholars to wrestle more deeply with these two perspectives. Interested readers can also consult the special issue on "Deviant Leisure" in the journal *Leisure/Loisir* (Vol. 30, 2006).

Authors in this book provided some ground for a deeper and more nuanced exploration of the positive yet negative potential of leisure. Freire and Stebbins (2010) stated that the assumption that leisure experience is always positive is based in the evidence that while experiencing it, individuals perceive the action as positive even if it goes against social standards. A parallel idea is offered by Perkins and Nakamura in their chapter of this book, who suggested that a flow experience/activity can be simultaneously positive and amoral. To fit or match individual and social parameters in leisure is then a matter of education and of construction of shared cultural meanings, which is the aim of intervention and prevention strategies.

From a historical perspective, there have been a number of times that social leaders have suggested that some type of leisure education is needed to help the masses or to help specific groups (e.g., youth) deal with leisure. This historically implicated need for leisure education may suggest that leisure in of itself is not inherently positive. Else, why would leisure education be necessary? Leisure education, itself a challenge to define, is fundamentally about change. That is, leisure education attempts to change the individual's leisure-related attitudes, behaviors, values, or skills from one less positive state to one more positive state. From this perspective, leisure education has also been considered to be a possible intervention to help reduce risk behaviors in leisure and promote positive and healthy experiences and behaviors. Perhaps this debate is merely a historical artifact as a result of initially poorly chosen words. Perhaps the correct term should have been called "time use education," which would then allow for the purity of the "leisure as inherently positive" perspective to live unchallenged. We wonder whether this is an unresolved debate or whether future research and philosophical inquiry can reconcile these two seemingly opposite perspectives.

Leisure, Human Strengths, Potentialities, and Lived Contexts

A topic with a rich history of research interest is leisure in daily life (e.g., Shaw's contributions in 1985, 1991, and 1992). Despite that history and interest, another common theme in this book is the need for scientific inquiry regarding leisure's contribution to daily positive well-being and development. Authors address the need for more research that focuses on relations between social contexts and the emergence and building of personal strengths, potentialities, and optimal functioning. Research is also needed to better understand how individual characteristics and motives interact with proximal and distal social relationships, structures, cultural values, and norms. Human experience integrates different dimensions, such as cognitive, affective, motivational, and physiological. From this perspective, opportunities,

meanings, and constraints for leisure in daily life are continually negotiated, sometimes successfully, sometimes not. Furthermore, we do not well understand how and what kinds of values are transmitted about leisure and its role in people's lives. Nor do we understand how societal structures contribute to opportunities for and experiences of leisure, neither – and in an opposite side – do we know enough about how physiological states can be causes or consequences of leisure behaviors. Finally, numerous leisure activities done in free time in daily life, such as forms of "electronic" leisure, have escaped leisure researchers' focused attention.

Several authors in this book have implicitly or explicitly identified that leisure as a life event (the integration of experience, activity, and context) can be a real-time laboratory to study human experience and behavior to enhance internal processes and/or external conditions of worthy living. In such way, positive leisure science should focus on leisure as an intertwined series of life events (from physiological, psychological, to environmental and societal). Only in that way it is possible to consider the complex range of related variables, not as a simple collection of discrete causes and consequences or relations, but as networked variables. That is, although discrete leisure activities and experiences may be important, it is the cumulative experiences and pattern of leisure that may be most interesting to study with respect to both related health and development outcomes as well as contributions to society over time.

Within this perspective, daily life becomes a true laboratory for gathering knowledge about human experience and leisure from a research or intervention perspective. Researchers have tended to ignore this important but more "mundane" aspect of leisure context, behavior, and experience. Daily leisure (or the pattern of leisure in one's life), however, is the main underpinning of human experience as people grow and develop within their daily events. As stated by John Kelly, "…the context of any research (in leisure field) should be '*ordinary life*'" (2000, p. 77). In accordance with his perspective, every simple or complex leisure life event is part of the ongoing construction of day-to-day life, and this is also true for the study of human optimal living.

Methods, Measurement, and Analytic Strategies in Leisure Studies

Throughout this book, a range of methods, measurement, and analytic strategies have illustrated empirical findings or underlying conceptual frameworks. In making suggestions for the future, authors questioned methods of gathering information about leisure variables and associated causes or outcomes. Their suggestions reflect a growing recognition on the use of multiple methods of data collection and analysis that must be available in the twenty-first century where complexity of phenomena is the core of leisure science.

In many scientific areas of inquiry, as stated previously in this chapter, the focus on daily life has become an important context for gaining knowledge about human life. Contemporary methodologies aimed to better understand daily life

have included a range of online and/or real-time data collection methods, such as the experience sampling method (Csikszentmihalyi & Larson, 1987), the ecological momentary assessment (Stone & Shiffman, 2002), or the day reconstruction method (Kahneman, Krueger, Schkade, Schwarz, & Stone, 2004). These methods are complementary to traditional retrospective, self-report data and improve researchers' abilities to measure the quality of people's lives and their subjective experiences, including psychosocial and physiological variables. Besides their particular strengths and pitfalls, these kinds of methodologies open the possibility of understanding how people experience the settings and activities of their lives or how they use their time, in terms of lived experience in real time, blending qualitative and quantitative forms of data. These methodologies highlight the ecological validity and supply the memory biases associated to the recall process applied in self-report measurements. Positive leisure science should include new methodologies to have the possibility to look to new and different data about leisure and related variables.

The advancement of new methods to analyze longitudinal data (e.g., latent transition analysis) or to better model nested data (e.g., hierarchical linear modeling) is also beginning to be used by leisure researchers. Still, more rigorous randomized controlled designs, or other designs such as factorial designs, are needed to answer questions about how and why leisure matters. Leisure researchers rarely describe how missing data have been handled, which is of great concern in longitudinal studies. Moreover, the rapid advances in technology have opened and will continue to open many avenues for alternative forms of data collection. Smart phones, social networking sites, netbooks, video and photo elicitation devices, and so on (this list may well be outdated by the time of the printing of this book) offer many possibilities for more sophisticated quantitative and qualitative leisure research.

New technologies used for scientific purposes call to question the form of research dissemination to scholars and practitioners. What forms of scholarship and science will be acceptable in the future? How will audio/visual/video forms of data collection be accepted and reported in order to verify quality of method and data analysis and interpretation? This question appears at the same time many social science journals are sharply limiting page lengths. With most scientific journal reviews now being completed online, the possibilities for other forms of data such as video or audio clips of photographs, for example, expand possibilities beyond numbers and words. These possibilities also apply to electronic versions of journals.

Positive Leisure Science (PLS): The New Challenge

Finally, a consideration on the proposed concept of PLS is relevant as both a conclusion and a new window for the future of leisure science. At the beginning of this book, yet as an idea, Freire suggested inserting positive leisure science (PLS) in the movement of the emergent positive psychology in psychological field. To date, the recent "positive paradigm" popular in psychology has not included leisure sciences

or if so, only sparingly. Nor have leisure researchers "jumped on the bandwagon." At the conclusion of this book, it appears that there is conceptual and empirical evidence to consider leisure research from this new positive perspective paradigm, although it is imperative not to neglect that many free time activities done in the name of leisure are not positive and may be in fact harmful to self and society. Theoretically, there cannot be a positive without a negative; thus, both sides come into play under the "positive" framework. This calls the question of, and highlights the challenge of knowing, what is PLS and what is it not.

Taking an interdisciplinary perspective, PLS may be spread across different sciences and approaches although its pillars are based in the study of people and worthy lives in or through leisure. Although this is not exclusive or new perspective in science, or even in psychology, it is new as a lens for leisure studies. This new perspective may require a reconceptualization about the core of leisure variables to be studied with the intentional aim of making new connections with other scientific fields and researchers from other perspectives inside and outside psychology.

As previously noted, it is important to state that the emergence of a positive paradigm does not deny the existence of the negative. The literature about the negative sides of leisure is more relevant than ever from a prevention and leisure education perspective. Prevention and leisure education, for example, can contribute to a more interdisciplinary approach to solving larger social issues such as substance abuse, mental health issues, obesity, or unhealthy aging. Thus, the logic is turning the negative into positive, not as a denial but in the spirit of improvement; strengthening the resources; or redeeming as stated in this book by Kleiber. The end objective is promoting the optimal functioning of individuals and societies, thus contributing to an ultimate objective of *thriving*, as reflected by Lerner, von Eye, Lerner, Lewin-Bizan, & Bowers (2010) conceptualization of positive development.

Considering leisure from a quotidian perspective will contribute to a deeper understanding of human well-being based on how individuals and groups interact with, and act upon, daily contexts and throughout day-by-day events. It will help understand patterns of behavior and interactions across all spheres of a person's life (e.g., personal, social, contextual, and/or physiological) that contribute to not only individual but societal health and well-being. Taking an approach such as a positive leisure science perspective that reflects a desire to promote optimal health and well-being may be an avenue for leisure science to be relevant to other disciplines and fields.

In the end, upon reflection of the authors' contribution to this book, we (Freire and Caldwell) are optimistic about the future of leisure research and it's past, current, and future contributions to promoting health and well-being of individuals, families, communities, and societies. Approaching leisure research from a positive leisure science perspective offers both challenges and rewards from scientific, policy, and practical perspectives. The authors in this book have provided a solid foundation for future thought, debate, and research on leisure.

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