



Leisure and Ageing Well

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Objectives

- Examine personal meanings of leisure
- Contextualise research on leisure and ageing well
- Summarise what we currently know about the role of leisure in later life
- Describe inequities in leisure and later life
- Explore how YOU can use leisure to age well and live life to the fullest



Meanings of Leisure

Take a minute and reflect on what **LEISURE** means to you.

When you think of the word leisure, what does it mean to you?

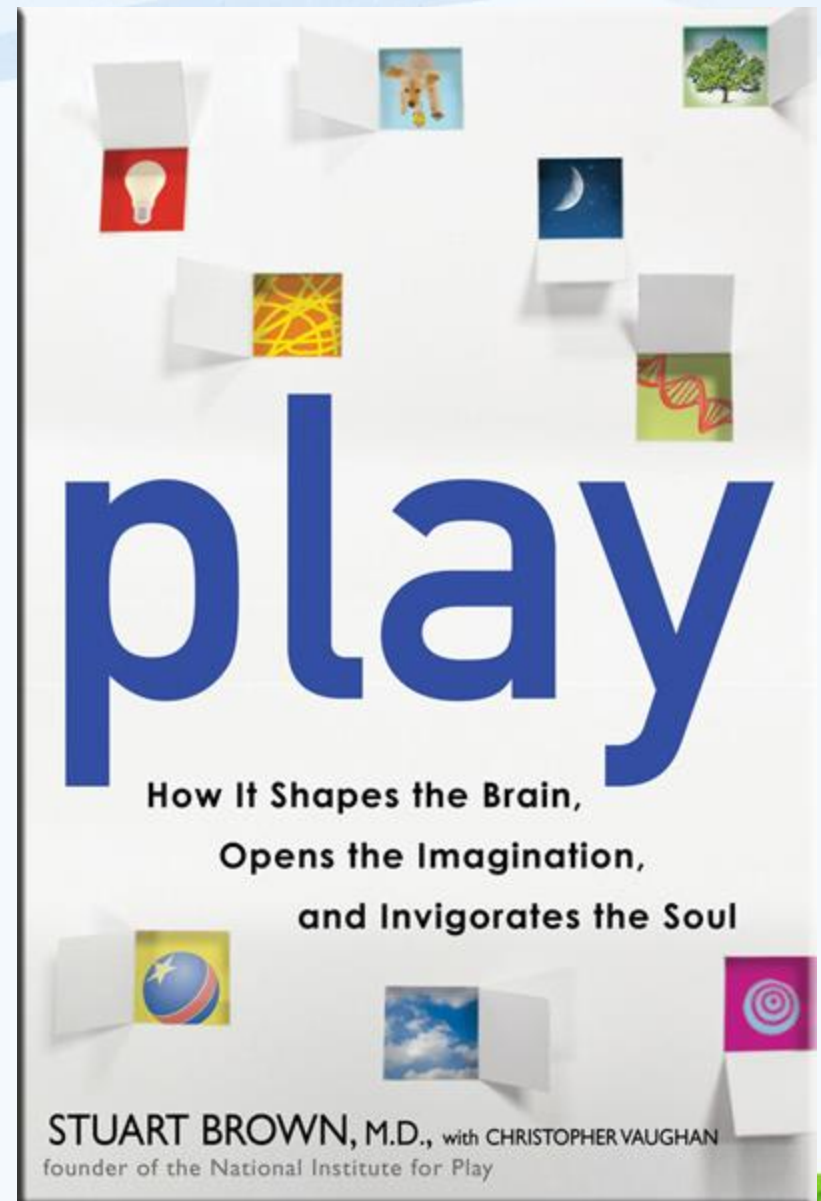
Once you have thought about it for a moment, share with the person next to you what leisure means to you.

Leisure is an Experience



“It is the quality of the experience of doing the activity, not the activity itself, that makes it leisure. Leisure is mainly motivated by intrinsic reasons, that is, the activity is chosen because of the meaningful qualities it holds for the individual. Therefore, leisure is primarily an *experience*.”

(Kelly, 1982)



Leisure is an Expression of Our Humanity

“Of all species, humans are the biggest players of all. We are built to play and built through play. When we play, we are engaged in the purest expression of our humanity, the truest expression of our individuality... It energizes us and enlivens us. It eases our burdens. It renews our natural sense of optimism and opens us up to new possibilities... Play is the vital essence of life. It is what makes life lively.”

(Brown, 2009)



Leisure is Well-Being

“Leisure provides the opportunity to consider the kind of life a person wishes to live, permitting reflection on the personal meaning of well-being and how it might be achieved... leisure provides the opportunity to do those things people consider meaningful and worthwhile... leisure allows people to reflect and to realize the personal values that constitute their well-being.”

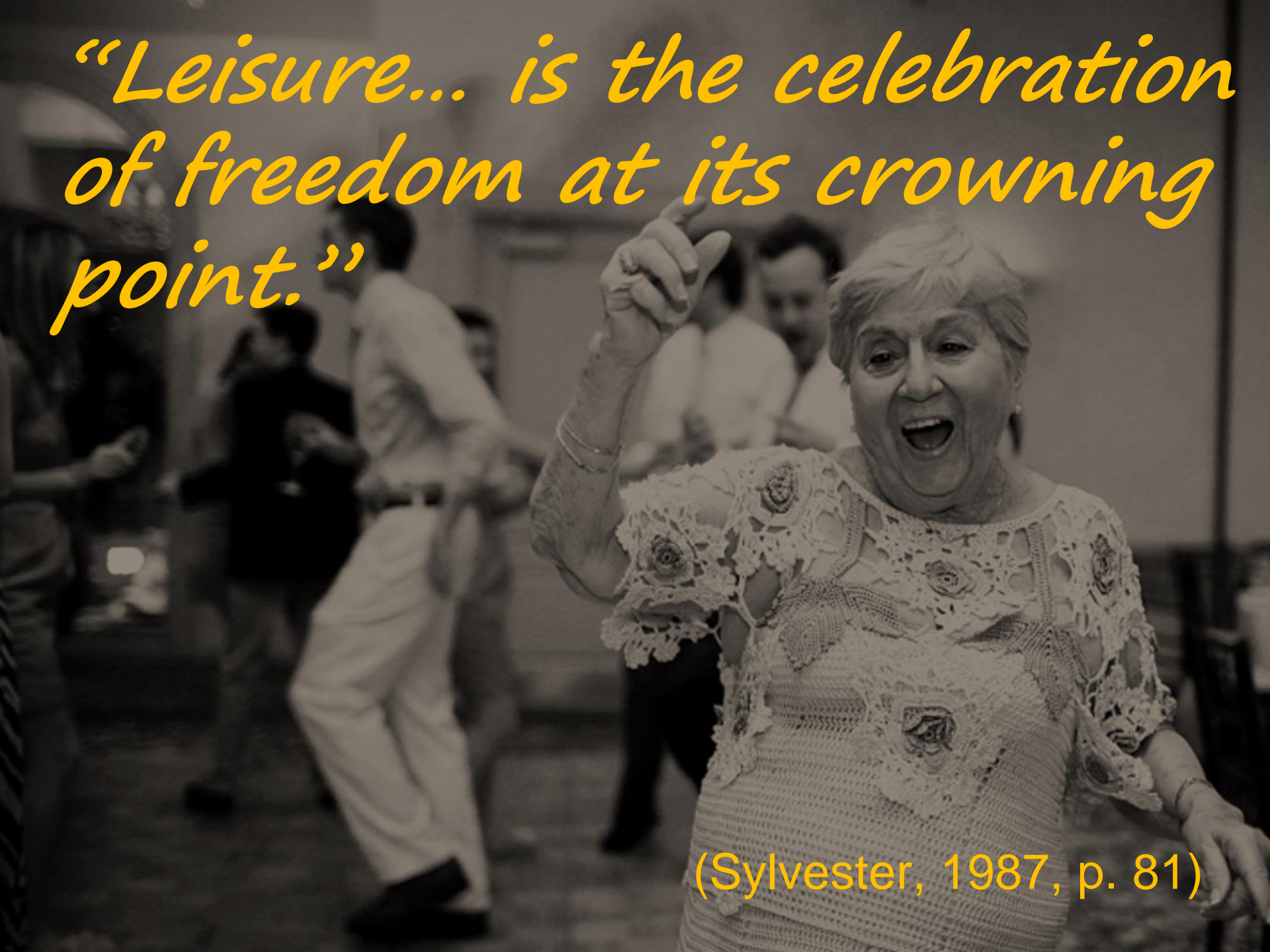
(Sylvester, 1992)

Leisure is a Human Right

“Leisure is among a new generation of human rights. Like other rights, awareness and acceptance of the right to leisure will require time... It will necessitate individuals sufficiently courageous to challenge the status quo.”

(Sylvester, 1992)

*“Leisure... is the celebration
of freedom at its crowning
point.”*



(Sylvester, 1987, p. 81)



Being
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Being
With

Seeking
Freedom

Finding
Balance

Making a
Difference

Having
Fun

Growing and
Developing





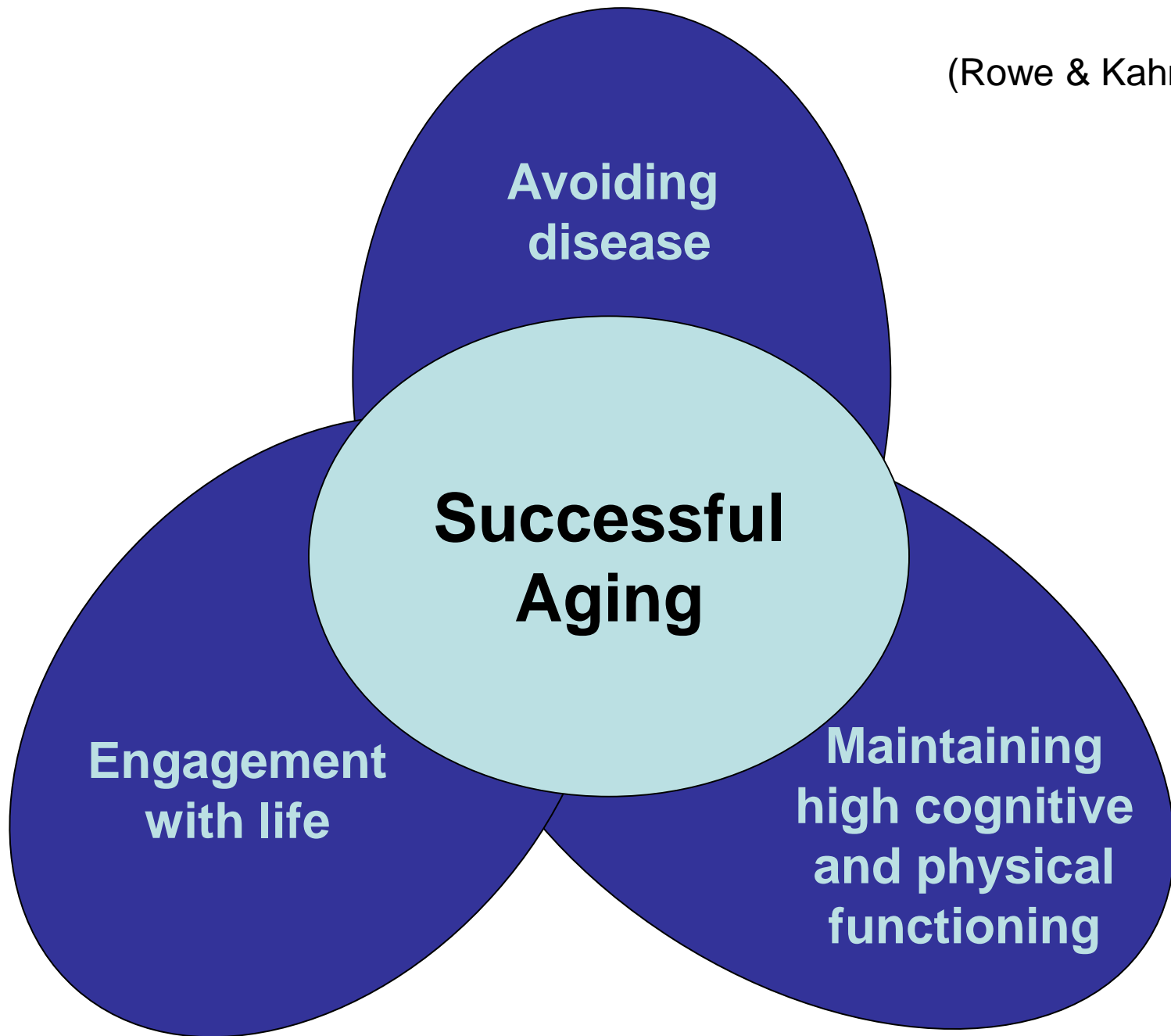
The New York Times Magazine



Why Do We Play?

Tom Schweitzer for The New York Times

(Rowe & Kahn, 1998)





Characteristics of these models:

- align themselves with more biologically-based models of ageing
- ageing viewed as a problem to be avoided
- prescribe how people *should* age
- place primary responsibility for “successful” ageing on the individual



Quotes from Older Adults



- *I found out there's a lot of give and take in this world. And if you put them together you have a good life.*



- *I take life as it comes. I suppose all you can do... I guess I had a pretty good life. Few drawbacks but...not too serious.*
- *Being able to appreciate what I've still got and not dwell on my losses, but look towards what I can do with what I've got left and just be grateful for that and love every moment.*



- *I'm not like depressed that I have it, I still have a good quality of life.*

Selective Optimization with Compensation Model

Antecedent Conditions

Life Development as Specialized
and Age-Graded Adaptation

Reduction in General
Reserve Capacity

Losses in Specific Functions

Processes

Selection
Optimization
Compensation

Outcome

Transformed
but
Effective
Life



(Baltes & Baltes, 1990)



Models of Ageing Well



- highlight both the losses AND gains, assets, and abilities
- reflect “lived” realities of ageing
- view AW not as a fixed, static outcome but an on-going, open-ended, dynamic process
- involve interactions between the unique characteristics of individuals and the broader contexts
- all individuals can age well when they have access to adequate human and material resources/supportive environments





So, how does
leisure and
play contribute
to ageing well
and quality of
later life?

***Leisure
and
Physical Well-being***



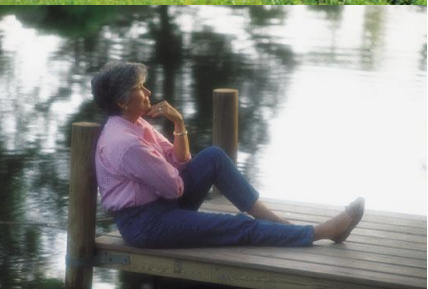
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uusZGXQTtI4>



- Active lifestyles extremely important for physical well-being
- Strenuous physical activities directly related to:
 - reduced risk of mortality
 - maintenance of functional ability and independence
 - reduced risk of a number of chronic diseases associated with ageing
- Physical activity effective in the treatment diabetes, osteoarthritis, osteoporosis, hypertension
- Less physically strenuous activities also associated with better functioning and longevity



Leisure and Cognitive Well-being



- An engaged lifestyle related to cognitive well-being
- More frequent participation in stimulating activities associated with:
 - higher levels of cognitive functioning
 - reduced rates of cognitive decline
 - reduced risk of Alzheimer's disease
 - a greater ability to tolerate more dementia pathology (cognitive reserve hypothesis)
- Engagement in some activities shows stronger relationships with certain cognitive well-being outcomes than others



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sPuz4duzyPw>



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fyZQf0p73QM>



Leisure and Psychological Well-being



- Older adults who participate in leisure activities:
 - are more content
 - report higher positive affect and mood states
 - are more satisfied with their lives
 - have lower levels of psychological distress, anxiety, depression, and negative affect
- **Frequency** and number or **range** of activities show stronger relationships than amount of time
- Different activities may have different benefits depending on motivation, level of satisfaction with activity, and the meaning attached to the activity



- Strenuous exercise and less strenuous physical activities and productive activities (volunteering) related to in enhanced mood and reductions in depressive symptoms
- Other types of leisure activities (e.g., outdoor and sports activities, games, visiting friends, social activities) show stronger associations with happiness and life satisfaction
- Very little research on *solitary/passive* activities and PWB



Leisure and Coping



- Leisure may play an important role in coping with stresses associated with life events, changes and transitions experienced in later life:
 - widowhood
 - caring for an older adult relative
 - declining health
- Continued participation in activities may lessen the impact of stressful events

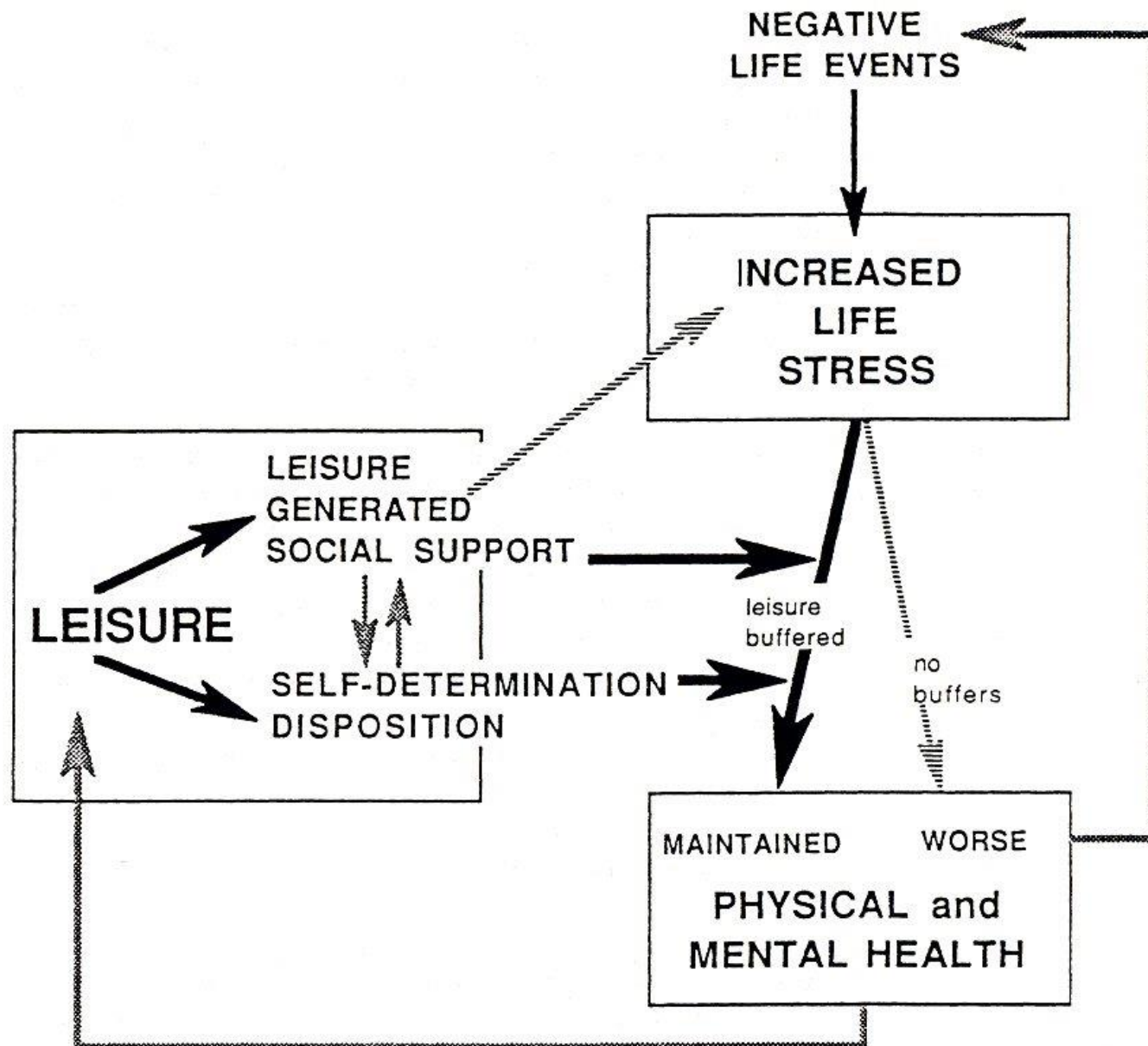


Figure 1. A theoretical model of the relationship between leisure and health

Functions of leisure in coping with negative life events/transitions:

- provides *distraction*
- generates *optimism about the future*
- aides *in the reconstruction of a life story that is continuous with the past*
- serves as a *vehicle of personal transformation*

(Kleiber et al. 2002)

Two main coping functions of leisure (Hutchison et al., 2003):

1. As a buffer from immediate stressors:

- as a mental distraction
- preserving a connection to the past
- escaping the confines of home/hospital
- escaping one's disability or illness

2. As a source of motivation to sustain coping efforts

- offering hope and optimism
- providing structure and a sense of purpose
- providing a sense of belonging and acceptance
- preserving a sense of competence, independence, and continuity of self
- maintaining physical and mental health



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HQLNHJB1OjU>



Leisure and Social and Spiritual Well-being



- Small body of theoretical and empirical work suggests leisure activities are potentially important venues/contexts for:
 - meeting and making friends in later life
 - behavioural, cognitive, and affective processes of friendship maintenance and development
 - strengthening intergenerational and cultural bonds
 - contributing to the welfare of the broader community
 - providing a sense of belonging and reducing isolation and loneliness
- Very little, if any, research on the role that leisure plays in enhancing spiritual well-being



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dn8Ba-nTAAE&list=PLsE68E5qac9qrnOf4NfRd5Hz-0HcXTWH1>



Leisure Inequities in Later Life



- Inequities in the access to leisure and meaningful activities exist among:
 - different ethnic groups
 - older adults living in poverty
 - residents living in long-term care homes
 - older adults who are isolated, especially those living in rural settings
 - older adults living in less developed parts of the world



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Remember to.....

D. A. N. C. E.



D -- Diversity

- participate in a range of activities
- by doing so, you ensure you are enhancing all areas of wellness

A -- Adaptation

- be prepared to adapt familiar and favourite activities in ways that allow you to still enjoy them
- do this by:
 - finding the support you need
 - changing aspects of the activity (how, what, when, where, with whom, for how long, etc.)
 - changing your attitude

N -- Novelty

- don't be afraid to try something new
- trying something new or learning a new skill is a great way to maintain cognitive wellness

C -- Continuity

- maintain continuity in those things you value most
- things, people and activities that bring meaning to our lives are important to who we are – our sense of self

E – Exchange

- be prepared to substitute one activity for another
- think about what it was about the activity that was meaningful to you
- then think about how you might get the same meaning out of another activity

We are all **ENTITLED** to leisure and play in our lives.

And, be creative and have fun
when you.....

D. A. N. C. E.



Thank You!

PiDC

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in Dementia Care

Enhancing Dementia Care for Everyone



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Sources

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