

## **Perspectives Regarding the Optimization of the Recreational Skills in Young Adults: Intervention Program Contribution**

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### **Abstract**

**Introduction:** *the purpose of this research is to study the stance of the young adults on the recreational therapies and on spending spare time, as well as to help them realise the degree of risk to which they expose themselves, in terms of health issues, when they don't engage in recreational activities. We also studied the way a recreational program cultivates relaxing skills among the subjects of this study.*

**Objectives:** *we offered training and education to these participants in order to make them more aware of the risk degree in regards to their health and to help them improve their recreational skills. We also aimed at establishing and developing a connection between the subjects and their recreation, knowing that this is necessary in order to maintain the inner balance.*

**Methods:** *we used qualitative methods for this research alongside other tools such as: observations, interviews, journals, case studies (for multiple cases). The recreational interview aimed at identifying the subjects' attitude towards their connection with recreation.*

**Results:** *the analysis of the case studies indicates that the subjects' voluntary participation in the program's activities was associated with positive emotions, such as joy and achievement and it was perceived as up-building for the participants.*

**Conclusions:** *the intervention program encouraged people to explore more leisure interests and to get involved in recreational programs. The recreational programs may include re-education, art-therapy and ergo-therapy activities, mentoring programs, sports and fitness.*

**Keywords:** *recreational therapy, spare time planning, recreational programs, activities, intervention*

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## **I. Introduction**

The recreational therapy is defined by the American Therapeutic Recreation Association (ATRA) as a systematic process which uses rest and other activity-based interventions in order to answer the assessed needs of the persons who find themselves suffering, representing a mean for the psychological and physical health, recovery and welfare.

During the 1970s, the field of recreation and services for spending the spare time began to obtain a new perspective, the people acknowledging that they have the capacity of making wise choices and of developing *themselves* during the spare time.

The author D. R. Austin (2008) in the book "Therapeutic Recreation Processes & Techniques" presents the support of the recreation therapies by the humanistic concepts. According to Cain (2002), Chapman (1975), George and Cristiani (1995), Sundeen et al. (1998), the concepts embracing the humanistic approach supports the following: not only children, but also adults are capable of change, every person is unique and possesses dignity and value; humans are in a dynamic interaction with the environment, people need to find a sense in their life; firstly, humans are social beings who, before anything else, feel the need of belonging and appreciation; secondly, humans are healthy and fight for their personal satisfaction; thirdly, humans express a tendency for self-actualisation.

Moreover, the recreational therapies are supported by the humanistic concepts in the writings of Gray (1975) and Murphy (1973, 1975), works directed towards the general field of recreation and spending spare time. As O'Morrow (1980) declared, the recreation therapies accentuate the concept that the person is involved in the process of change. The specialists see every client as an individual who possesses a unique biological, psychological and social background with which he/she reacts to the environment. Moreover, essential for the recreational therapy is the conviction that people have the freedom to change themselves, take decisions and assume responsibility for their own actions, especially with regard to the spare time. This freedom or ability to develop fully is in key with the provision of the recreational activities therapy. Through activities, the clients express their natural motivation towards the implication in positive experiences, in contrast to the passive expectations that the environment would act upon them. In the atmosphere of acceptance foreseen in recreation, the clients have the possibility of reaching

the unexplored potential. The humanistic approach has exemplified that recreation offers an excellent theoretical framework that helps the clients grow and prevent or improve the issues which they face.

The concept of "*high level of welfare*" is an integrated functioning method oriented towards the maximization of the potential which the individual is capable of reaching (Dunn, 1961). Dunn's approach, which centres upon the individual's integrity, requires not only the absence of the physical disease; it also involves a high level of psychological and environmental welfare. Thus, the health concept, according to the notion of the high level of welfare, comprises the mental health and the social welfare. When limitations forbid reaching the high level of welfare, this can be achieved through the modification of the individual's environment so that the individual is led to a possible improvement. The concept of high level of welfare extends beyond the traditional medical practices in order to comprise all the aspects related to the person, mind, body, spirit and the environment rather than dealing with isolated pieces and symptoms (D. R. Austin, 2008, p. 162-163).

The recreational therapy can be defined as any free, voluntary and expressive activity at the motor, sensorial or mental level which contributes to the attitude of personal satisfaction and the freeing of emotional health. Many contemporary authors have continued the tradition of including in manuals the recreation and spending the spare time as terms that define the recreational therapy. The recreational therapy is the systemic usage, recreational planning and other intervention activities, in a supporting environment, with the intention of carrying on a change of attitudes, beliefs, behaviours and abilities necessary for the psychological, social, health and welfare adaptation (Shank & Coyle, 2002, p. 54).

The recreational therapy uses the deliberate interventions with the aim of involving the clients in the entertainment activities and for spending the spare time, in order to experiment the optimal levels of health for them as individuals (Austin, 2013, p. 154). Other common themes found within the definitions of the recreational therapies are planning and spending the spare time as intervention for the increase of the client's health and welfare, following the intervention. Shortly, these point to the intentional usage of recreation/spending the spare time activities as being means of producing positive benefits for the personal balance. The voluntary action and the activity were associated with positive emotions such as joy, entertainment and feelings of achievement and it was

perceived as being beneficial or constructive for the participants (Austin, 2011; Neulinger, 1980). Actually, by having a healing function, the recreation returns to the writings of Aristotle, who said that the persons restore their mind and body through recreation (Austin, 2011).

If recreation is defined as being restoration, using the therapeutic term, in combination with recreation, this is therapeutic recreation. Today, the recreational therapies consider recreation as a planned clinical intervention aimed towards health, which leads to results regarding a better quality of life.

Although there are many points of view with regard to spending the spare time (Mannell & Kleiber, 1997), the authors (for example: Iso-Ahola, 1980; Neulinger, 1980; Smith & Theberge, 1987) usually referred to the "perceived freedom" and "intrinsic motivation" factors as being defining.

Spending the spare time seems to be one of the best opportunities for the persons to experiment self-actualisation since it offers opportunities to have success in practising pleasurable self-selected activities (D. R. Austin, 2008, p. 163-166).

The recreational therapy works with clients in order to restore and integrate the social and cognitive function and in order to consolidate the confidence and, also, in order to develop the adaptation abilities. The intervention fields vary very much and are based upon the client's interest. Examples of means of intervention include creative arts (for example crafts, music, dance, theatre, among others), sports, adventure programming, dance/movement and education for spending the spare time. Although it would seem that these activities are those which somebody could easily do, many times people either do not make the time to spend the spare time or engage themselves in unhealthy activities for spending the spare time (such as drug consumption) and need the education with regard to the spending of the spare time and how to put it into practice in their daily life.

Through activity sessions, the therapists can help guide the client through activities of spending the spare time, activities which they can apply in real life situations in order to benefit from a generally healthy and balanced life. The therapists can offer therapy relating to community reintegration, adaptation to recreational programs, counselling for spending the spare time, sports activities.

The evaluation includes the recreational interests, the attitude towards recreation and spending the spare time, the social and family support, as well as the analysis of any barrier which lies in the path of the

recreational activities. The recreational therapy program can be divided in five basic components. These are: a) Re-education; b) Practical artistries; c) Community reintegration program; d) Mentoring program, e) Sports and fitness (<http://terapirekreasi.blogspot.ro/2012/08/recreation-program.html>).

The best known models of recreational therapy presented by D. R. Austin (2008) in his book are:

**"Abilities to spend the spare time" model:** the model was introduced in 1978 by Gunn and Peterson. This model was revised along the years. The most recent revision, made by Stumbo and Peterson, was published in 2009. The mission of the "Abilities to spend the spare time" model is to help the clients with difficulties in this field to develop a lifestyle of spending the spare time, as well as the independent functioning of the client in the selection of entertainment experiences and activities (Stumbo and Peterson, 2009, p. 29). The model has three major components:

**The first component** is the functional intervention and it deals with the improvement of the functional abilities.

**The second component** is educational, it teaches how to spend the spare time, it is focused on the client, it aims at cultivating the attitudes relating to spending the spare time, and also at developing knowledge and abilities.

**The third component** is recreational, it has to do with the structured activities which offer the clients the possibility of enjoying the entertainment experiences (Stumbo and Peterson, 2009).

Among other models oriented towards spending the spare time we can mention:

**"Promoting health protection" model** (Austin, 1996) which offers the clients the possibility to recover following a threat aimed at health (health protection) and to achieve an optimal health (health promotion). The mission of the recreational therapeutic model is to use activity, recreation and spending the spare time in order to help people deal with the issues which serve as barriers to health and help them achieve higher levels of health and welfare. The recreational specialists contribute to health by helping people achieve the needs for stabilization and actualization until they are ready and capable of assuming responsibility for themselves. This is achieved through the participation of the client at prescribed recreational activities and activities for spending the spare time.

As it was mentioned earlier, the clients can enter the therapeutic rest, which varies from a precarious to full health. For example, they can be in a precarious health state if the stability tendency is shattered. Usually, such persons are lacking the energy and can experience feelings of depression. This does not involve the absence of total joy.

Even the sickest persons have moments when "they feel better". They can temporarily enter the recreational experiences or the experiences of spending the spare time which even produce growth and development. Unfortunately, despite this, such occasions are not long-lived because of the existing health issues.

#### **"Potential for change" model**

The model is based upon the humanistic assumption that creatures have a natural aspiration towards absolute unity, health and welfare. Piepteni (1989) wrote: "From conception time we begin an endless search for integrity and health, which never ceases until death". The following question is raised: is this aspiration for health the reason why the client participates in recreational treatments and rehabilitation programs, including therapeutic ones? Specialists and other professionals assume the role of promoting the conditions which would allow the unity, health and welfare to be reached. The clients are perceived as possessing an unlimited changing potential (D. R. Austin, 2008, p. 172-175).

D. R. Austin, M. E. Crawford, B. P. McCormick, M. V. Puymbroeck (2015), in the book "The Recreational therapy. An introduction" also presents the following models:

**The model for spending the spare time for the persons with disabilities**, developed by Dattilo, Kleiber and Williams (1998). The model dedicates special attention to the promotion of the persons with disabilities with the aim to integrate them socially.

**The entertainment and welfare model** - Carruthers and Hota (2007) concentrate themselves on the experience of spending the spare time of the persons with handicap, encouraging them not to mind the others' reactions to their invalidity. Practitioners who use the model must understand the empirical and theoretical knowledge relating to the experience of spending the spare time.

**The burgeoning through spending the spare time model** by Anderson and Heyne (2012) is an extension of the entertainment and welfare. This model considers the social environment (society, attitudes and practices) as being inadequate for the persons with

deficiencies. Thus, this model affirms that the environment must be changed in order to allow persons with deficiencies to fully integrate themselves in the society and prosper during their spare time (D. R. Austin, M. E. Crawford, B. P. McCormick, M. V. Puymbroeck, 2015, p. 172-178).

The **motivation** for the present study is inspired by the "*Abilities of spending the spare time*" model which proposes to help clients – namely young adults – with difficulties in this field to develop a healthy lifestyle which would integrate recreation as a necessity. From the individual case study, I often encounter tired and exhausted adults, who carry to the extremes their work, adults for who no time remains to relate with recreation or who forgot to consider that this might be a priority.

The large number of working hours increases the stress and leads to burnout. The book "Rest: Why You Get More Done When You Work Less" (Pang, 2016) shows that employees should work four hours, the models being Charles Darwin and Charles Dickens, who worked only four hours per day and obtained what they wanted for themselves. The time which they spent for relaxation, named "deliberate rest", was as important as the working time.

## **II. Objectives**

The present study is a research and its' main purpose is to determine the adults' point of view towards recreation and spare time spending, as well as increasing their awareness towards the risks they expose themselves to when it comes to health issues, by illustrating how implementing recreational programs helps to build the connection with recreation and also how it maintains the physical and mental health. The objectives of the study were: to change the position towards recreation by providing education-training with the purpose of becoming aware of the risk degree regarding health among the young adults and to improve their position towards the connection with the recreation; building-up the connection with recreation, which is necessary in order to preserve the physical and mental health and to regain the inner balance; to build recreational programs that cultivate and develop good relationships among adults.

**The general hypothesis** which the study goes to prove is that attending a recreational program will be positively associated with an improved connection with recreation and a better physical and mental health. The study has two **specific hypotheses**: 1. It is assumed that attending the training programs will contribute to

increasing awareness of the risk degree regarding health issues among the young adults and change their stance towards the recreation. 2. It is assumed that the involvement in the recreation programs will lead to an improved connection with recreation.

### **III. Method**

The research design used qualitative methods such as the questionnaire, journal and multiple case studies. Through the interview, I intended to monitor the position towards the connection with recreation in 10 subjects, young adults who carry on their activity in the psychological, social and humanities field, as well as to help them become aware of the risk degree to which they expose their health when they do not involve themselves in recreation.

The subjects participated in training sessions starting September 2016 until February 2017, aiming at improving their connection with the recreation. Following the closure of the training, the subjects applied a recreational program made up of 12 activities which combined outdoors walking techniques with art-therapy techniques.

*The Evaluation* was done at the beginning of each training session using a questionnaire regarding the recreation interests, the stance towards recreation and spare time spending, the social and family support, as well as any obstacle which blocks the recreational activities etc. It had the following structure:

#### **1. Which were your entertainment interests?:**

a. Passive interests (for example: movies, TV, theatre, watching sports, etc.), b. Active interests (for example: art show, crafts, etc.), c. Interests from the athletics and fitness domain (for example, sports and physical exercises, walking), d. Organisations and involvement interests (for example: Church, clubs, etc.), e. Would you get a job in any activity field? ("Increased degree of risk?").

#### **2. How would you spend your spare time? a.**

How many hours have you worked per week, on average? b. How many hours have you invested in recreation per week, on average? c. On a scale from 1 to 10, what would be your level of satisfaction with regard to your lifestyle and spare time spending? d. How much spare time do you spend with your family and friends? e. What are the obstacles which lay in your way when it comes to spending quality spare time? f. What are the barriers which prevent you from making spare time? g. How do you wish to spend your spare time?

The participants were young adults (10 females) with high education, with jobs in the

psychological, social and humanities field, unsatisfied with their connection with recreation or who desired to improve it.

The training program consisted of 36 theory hours and workshops, involving groups of 6 adults. The main subjects of the workshops helped learning expressive recreation techniques (drawing, painting, modelling, collating, theatre, music, game, movement and dance). Here are some types of recreational activities: artistic, entertainment interests, recreational agenda, time management, recreation workshops, recreation programs, examples of recreation programs.

#### **Recreational program:**

Each adult's homework was to participate in a recreational program in nature. This was a blend of recreational activities in nature, with therapeutic art techniques such as drawing, painting, poetry, etc. The routine was to find the best suited time during the week to spend two hours for recreational activities. The program's activities for each particular subject consisted of practical theme works which, as soon as they were accomplished, were written down in a recreational journal.

In his book *"The Curious Nature Guide. Explore the Natural Wonders all around you"*, the author C. W. Leslie (2015) advanced a nature recreational design which was the inspiration pattern used to create the activities. The suggested activities within the program were:

1. **Watch nature where you live.** Write down in the recreation journal all that you saw.
2. **Remembrances from nature.** Search for your memories of nature. How did they affect your life?
3. **Draw a map of your neighbourhood.** What differentiates your house from the other houses?
4. **Choose to observe nature,** to discover nature in the place where you find yourself (park, airport, parking space, office etc.) Write down the new things you saw.
5. **Draw a picture with the colours of your day.** Colour your season.
6. **Discover nature by NIGHT:** discover when the sun rises and when it sets, discover the changes produced by the fall of night and darkness. Look at the sky during the night. Watch the constellations. Draw a map of the stars. Take a walk during the night.
7. **Write a short poem** or describe a recent nature experiment.

8. **Discover nature:** plants in the garden, insects, birds, leaves, the creatures that live in the tree next to you, the plants, and the ground. Draw the way in which nature looks during your favourite season.
9. **Keep a journal of the things you observed during daytime.** What nature details captured your attention?
10. **Meditate while you walk. "A walking meditation"**
11. **Nature and art.** Make an appointment to an art museum. Listen to nature sounds.
12. **Celebrate.** Plan recreational activities for each season.

The recreation program was concluded with an evaluation activity, achieved with the help of the interview technique, which comprised the following questions:

- How did you feel following the practice of the activities?
- How did your connection with recreation improved?
- What recreational activities do you choose to practice in the future in order to improve your satisfaction level towards your life style?
- Recommendations for the adult recreation programs.

#### **IV. Results: Case studies**

We will present below examples of cases in which we applied the *evaluation* regarding recreational interests, analysing the stance towards recreation and spare time spending, the social and family support, as well as the limits which block the recreational activities, all of which confirmed the research hypotheses.

##### **Case study number 1**

**C. A.** is 36 years old, working as teaching personnel. Following the evaluation of the *recreational interests* the following ensued. The subject mentioned movies and watching sports shows as activities that are part of the category of passive recreation interests. She preferred painting as an activity chosen from the category of active recreation interests. She also practiced swimming, skiing, bicycle riding, hiking as activities from the athletics and fitness domain. We mention that she is involved in culinary art activities together with a group of friends in order to refer to the organisational interests and implication category.

With regard to the program *Attitude towards recreation and spending the spare time*, the subject

worked, on average, 11 hours per day, 55 hours per week, and spent 14 recreational hours per week. On a scale from 1 to 10, the satisfaction level regarding the life style and the spare time spending was 7. Regarding the *social and family support*, she spent time with the family every evening for one hour, with friends one evening per week (3 hours) or every two weeks.

The main *limits which block the recreational activities* are the lack of energy and time management.

The *desire for planning the spare time* is to undertake more than one activity (city outings, bicycle riding, going to the movies, to the theatre, practicing sports - swimming), accompanied by family and friends.

##### **The recreation program intervention**

The purpose of recreation program intervention was to increase awareness of the risk degree with regard to health, as well as to improve the connection with recreation.

**The changes following the practice of the activities:** *"I felt well, incredibly well; the memories of the places which had me connected with the nature gave me a state of silence, peace, joy, nostalgia, and desire to start living life again."*

**Improving the connection with recreation:** *"I know that I am more aware of it and of its importance. I know that when I feel I cannot make it, I can do anything to recreate and most of the times I succeed."*

**Applying recreational activities to improve the satisfaction regarding life style and recreation:** *"Relaxation through art – music, painting, theatre, movie, time with the beloved ones inside or outside the house, friends, cooking, communion with nature, time for me and personal care, humanitarian activities to help, etc."*

**Recreational program recommendations:** *"I believe that, if pursued in a structured way, all the things within the program evidently apply to each individual, according to his/her needs."*

Following the intervention, the person has become more aware of the connection with recreation and of its importance, and now she does everything that is necessary to relax. The lack of management and planning of spare time was an obstacle blocking the satisfaction regarding relaxation. Moreover, now she knows her relaxation interests which she may apply in the future.

##### **Case study number 2**

**V. C.** is 46 old, psychologist by profession. Following the evaluation of the *recreation interests* the

following ensued: her interests from the category of passive recreation range from watching sports shows, to reading, and watching TV. She prefers the cooking activities from the category of active recreation interests. She practiced physical exercises and outdoors walking from the category of athletics and fitness domain. With regard to the organisational interests and involvement, she did various activities for some sick friends and family members.

With regard to the program *Attitude towards recreation and spending the spare time* the subject worked, on average, 9 hours per day, 45 hours per week and she spent 21 recreational hours per week, 4 hours per day. On a scale from 1 to 10, the satisfaction level in connection to the life style and the spare time spending was 5. Regarding the *social and family support domain*, she spent time with the family every weekday for one hour and in the weekend 10 hours.

The *limits which block the recreational activities* were lack of planning and synchronization with the other peoples' schedule, the working program which is too loaded, and the management of the financial resources.

The *desires for planning the spare time are* theatre, shows, sports competitions (to be watched live!!!), hiking and excursions.

#### **Recreation program intervention**

The purpose of the recreation program intervention was to increase awareness of the risk degree with regard to health, as well as to improve the connection with recreation.

**Changes following the practice of the activities:** *"I felt that I discovered new facades of life. I watched the same reality with new eyes".*

#### **Improving the connection with recreation:**

*"I become conscious that recreation must also be planned, if we want to have quality time, it must be treated with all seriousness. I think more about its importance and I relax as often as I can. I find more pleasure in the small joys and beauties which I experience or I meet. For example, I relax myself when I am on my way to and from work by watching the sky, the clouds, the plants, the houses etc."*

**Applying recreational activities to improve the satisfaction regarding life style and recreation:**

*"Movement, painting, musical auditions."*

#### **Recreational program recommendations:**

*"movement games, origami."*

Following the intervention, the subject has become conscious that recreation must be planned, seen with all seriousness, she admitted its importance

and she is now looking for means to practice it. The lack of planning, the lack of synchronization with the other peoples' schedule, the work program which is too loaded, the handling of the financial resources were obstacles blocking the satisfaction regarding relaxation. Moreover, now she knows her interests of recreation which she is going to apply in the future.

#### **Case study number 3**

**C. I.** is 30 years old, psychologist by profession. Following the evaluation of the *recreation interests* the following ensued: the subject mentioned movie, theatre, opera, concerts, ballet and music when choosing from the category of passive recreation interests. The subject was not involved in activities from the active interests' recreation category. She stated that she practiced walking in the park, and shopping when asked about the activities from the category of interests in the athletics and fitness field. She does not practice the organisation and involvement interests.

With regard to the program *Attitude towards recreation and spending the spare time*, the subject worked, on average, 35 hours per week, and spent 5 recreational hours per week. On a scale from 1 to 10, the satisfaction level in connection to the life style and the spare time spending was 3.

Regarding the *social and family support*, she does not usually spend time with the family or with friends due to her busy schedule. She spends about 5 hours per month with the family.

The main *limits which block the recreational activities* are the lack of time and the need for rest (sleep).

The *desire to plan the spare time is:* to travel, to start practicing Yoga.

#### **Recreation program intervention**

The purpose of the recreation program intervention was to increase awareness of the risk degree with regard to health, as well as to improve the connection with recreation.

**Changes following the practice of the activities:** *"For me this program was welcomed especially because I forget to do this thing... sometimes I forget to pay attention to what happens around me and sometimes I forget to listen to my body needs (when food or sleep are involved)."*

#### **Improving the connection with recreation:**

*"Eventually, I became aware of some of my fears. I need to pay more attention to what happens around me... make sense of what nature offers to me. Currently, the connection has improved, but this thing will not last very long if I do not repeat it. Such a*

pattern must be repeated in order to become a reflex, as we should all do."

**Applying recreational activities to improve the satisfaction regarding life style and recreation:** "Movement, painting, musical auditions. Recreational methods which I want to practice in the future include these exercises, which bring me closer to nature, as well as the mindfulness exercises, listening to meditational music and practice meditation."

**Recreational program recommendations:** "As recommendation for adults it would be the mindfulness exercises, communion with nature, colouring mandalas."

Following the intervention, the subject has become conscious that she must cut in if she wants to improve her connection with recreation and she must repeat the activity program that she undertook in order to turn it into a lifestyle.

#### Case study number 4

**A. S.** is 37 years old, psychologist by profession. Following the evaluation of the *recreation interests* the following ensued: from the category of passive recreation interests, the subject has mentioned Facebook, theatre. The subject does not involve herself in activities from the active recreation interests' category. From the category of interests in the athletics and fitness field she has practiced dancing. She does not practice the organizational and involvement interests. With regard to the program *Attitude towards recreation and spending the spare time* the subject worked, on average, 60 hours per week, she spent maximum 1 recreational hour per day, and at the end of the week, a maximum of 4 recreational hours. On a scale from 1 to 10, the satisfaction level in connection to the life style and the spare time spending was 3. Regarding the *social and family support*, she spends very little time with the family, only a few hours at the end of the week.

The *limits which block the recreational activities* were the high number of working hours, lack of time.

The *desires to plan the spare time* are to spend time outdoors, dance and play together with the family members.

#### Recreation program intervention

The purpose of the recreation program intervention was to increase awareness of the risk degree with regard to health, as well as to improve the connection with recreation.

**Changes following the practice of the activities:** "I remembered how good it is to recreate. I

had forgotten how to do it and it was as if I needed somebody to teach me how to do it."

**Improving the connection with recreation:** "I rediscovered relaxation and I no longer want to lose it. I want to make sure it is part of my life."

**Applying recreational activities to improve the satisfaction regarding life style and recreation:** "Dancing, drawing, outdoors walks."

**Recreational program recommendations:** "I believe that adults need to learn again how to recreate. I would look for recreational methods which I would apply in office, during the weekend, rainy days, structured by categories."

Following the intervention, the subject mentions that she has discovered the connection with recreation and considers that adults need to be taught to relax, because they seem to have forgotten it.

#### Case study number 5

**M. V.** is 26 years old, psychologist by profession. Following the evaluation of the *recreation interests* the following ensued: Choosing from the category of passive recreation interests, the subject has mentioned movies, TV shows and reading. The subject is involved in the following activities from the category of active recreational interests: sewing, cooking, and shopping for groceries. She does not have an interest for the athletics and fitness category. She is more interested in the organisational and involvement category, spending time with old friends/colleagues, organizing birthdays. With regard to the *Attitude towards recreation and spending the spare time* program the subject worked 40 hours per week, and she spent 20 hours per week recreating. On a scale from 1 to 10, the satisfaction level in connection to the life style and the spare time spending was 7. Regarding the *social and family support*, the subject spends 35 % of the time with family and friends.

The main *limits which block the recreational activities* both in the past and in the present were the job related stress, lack of money, time and family duties.

The *desire to plan the spare time* is about taking nature walks, hiking, cooking, reading, running.

#### Recreation program intervention

The purpose of the recreation program intervention was to increase awareness of the risk degree with regard to health, as well as to improve the connection with recreation.

**Changes following the practice of the activities:** "melancholic, happy, confident."



**Improving the connection with recreation:**

*"I have found new means of relaxing and discovering the beauty in common places."*

**Applying recreational activities to improve the satisfaction regarding life style and recreation:**  
*"drawing, nature walks, poems."*

**Recreational program recommendations:**  
*"long-distance bicycle rides, childhood games, therapeutic art activities (braiding a bouquet that mirrors the good qualities, from fresh grass, painting the dream place), craft activities such as stitching and croquet, cooking activities (invents a new dish), etc."*

Following the intervention, the subject became more confident and she found new recreational methods. Furthermore, she discovered creative resources and ideas to improve her connection with recreation.

**Case study number 6**

C.E. is 39 years old, occupational therapist by profession. Following the evaluation of the *recreation interests* the following ensued: the subject practices passive interests, and from the active interests, she practices hiking. With regard to the program *Attitude towards recreation and spending the spare time* the subject worked, on average, 45 hours per week, and spent 15 hours recreating. On a scale from 1 to 10, the satisfaction level in connection to the life style and the spare time spending was 7. Regarding the *social and family support*, the subject spent the weekends with family and friends.

The *limits which block the recreational activities* are the involvement in her children's education and the feeling of guilt that does not allow her to relax without being involved in other activities.

The *desires to plan the spare time* is reading and dancing.

**Recreation program intervention**

The purpose of the recreation program intervention was to increase awareness of the risk degree with regard to health, as well as to improve the connection with recreation.

**Changes following the practice of the activities:**

*"I discovered personal resources to invest in recreation."*

**Improving the connection with recreation:**

*"I began to learn to relax wherever I find myself, including at work."*

**Applying recreational activities to improve the satisfaction regarding life style and recreation:**  
*"outing, reading."*

**Recreational program recommendations:**  
*"journeys, outings."*

Following the intervention, the subject discovered time planning resources for the recreational activities she desired.

**Case study number 7**

A.T. is 37 is old, psychology teacher by profession. Following the evaluation of the *recreation interests* the following ensued: The subject is involved in the active recreation interests as athletics and fitness. She does not practice the organisational and involvement interests. With regard to the program *Attitude towards recreation and spending the spare time* the subject has worked, on average 40 hours per week, and spent maximum 19 hours per week recreating. On a scale from 1 to 10, the satisfaction level in connection to the life style and the spare time spending was 5. Regarding the *social and family support*, the subject is satisfied with the time spent with the family.

The *limits which block the recreational activities* both in the past and in the present were her job and the general stress, household responsibilities, preparing herself for the job tasks, homework.

The *desires to plan the spare time* are to spend more time in nature.

**Recreation program intervention**

The purpose of the recreation program intervention was to increase awareness of the risk degree with regard to health, as well as to improve the connection with recreation.

**Changes following the practice of the activities:** *"I felt extraordinary."*

**Improving the connection with recreation:**

*"My connection with relaxation gradually improved."*

**Applying recreational activities to improve the satisfaction regarding life style and recreation:**  
*"outing, running, roller-skating, trips."*

**Recreational program recommendations:**  
*"discover nature, new tracks, art therapy."*

Following the intervention, the subject mentions that she has improved the connection with recreation and recommends the programs as the one prescribed.

**Case study number 8**

D.S. is 52 years old, psychologist by profession. Following the evaluation of the *recreation interests* the following ensued: the subject practices passive interests and organisational field interests. With regard to the program *Attitude towards recreation and spending the spare time* the subject worked on average 50 hours per week, and spent maximum 20 recreational hours. On a scale from 1 to 10, the satisfaction level in

connection to the life style and the spare time spending was 5. Regarding the **social and family support**, the subject spends, on average, 20 hours weekly with her family and friends.

The **limits which block the recreational activities** were the great number of working hours.

The **desires to plan the spare time** are linked to spending time outdoors, painting and reading.

#### **Recreation program intervention**

The purpose of the recreation program intervention was to increase awareness of the risk degree with regard to health, as well as to improve the connection with recreation.

**Changes following the practice of the activities:** *"After carrying on the activities, I remembered childhood, the moments spent in the countryside, along with my brothers and the beloved ones. Nature is the place where we are always reborn, the place where we recharge our energy, the place from where we come from and where we go to."*

#### **Improving the connection with recreation:**

*"Surely the connection with recreation has improved. Nature, the time granted to us, the miracles that surround us (plants, birds, trees, flowers, animals), they all give us positive energy and make us leave behind all that means routine. Moreover, music, painting, the silence of the forest, the chirping of the birds are not only energy sources, but also creativity and rebirth sources."*

#### **Applying recreational activities to improve the satisfaction regarding life style and recreation:**

*"I want to practice hiking, to lose myself in nature, in the forest, no matter the season; I want to look at the sky from the mountain top. I like painting, music listening, nature, I enjoy the sun, the water and especially the beloved ones."*

#### **Recreational program recommendations:**

*"I recommend to all the adults to awake the child within themselves and return to nature, the source from where we all get our energy. Moreover, I recommend to everybody the practice of society games, dancing, staying in touch with the beloved ones, music listening and painting."*

Following the intervention, the subject mentions that the connection with recreation was improved and recommends painting techniques, dancing and especially time spent in nature.

#### **Case study number 9**

**M. N.** is 42 years old, psychologist by profession. Following the evaluation of the **recreation**

**interests** the following ensued: the subject mentioned watching TV shows, movies, theatre when picking from the category of passive recreation interests category. From the category of athletic field interests, she mentioned the physical exercises. With regard to organisational interests, she mentioned that she attends religious services.

With regard to the program **Attitude towards recreation and spending the spare time** the subject worked, on average, 60 hours per week, and spent 2 recreational hours per week. On a scale from 1 to 10, the satisfaction in connection to the life style and the spare time spending was 3. Regarding the **social and family support** the subject spends with her family about 2 hours daily.

The **limits which block the recreational activities** are overwork and lack of money.

The **desires to plan the spare time** are related to spending time with the family members, going to concerts and skating.

#### **Recreation program intervention**

The purpose of the recreation program intervention was to increase awareness of the risk degree with regard to health, as well as to improve the connection with recreation.

**Changes following the practice of the activities:** *"In the beginning I felt very frustrated, but then I became conscious that I do not live "within myself", I do not see myself, I do not hear myself and I do not pay attention to myself. The moment I accepted the frustrations, I realised that I am the one holding the key. Everything is up to me. In the end I find myself fulfilled, it was like a return to the source and the most important was to discover myself."*

#### **Improving the connection with recreation:**

*"As long as recreation helped me remember and treasure myself, the connection with it greatly improved in the way that I always remember to take time to become aware that I am the most important character in my life."*

#### **Applying recreational activities to improve the satisfaction regarding life style and recreation:**

*"All the activities from the project seemed appropriate to me and good for my relaxation but what I chose to do in the future and I liked the most is: discover nature, observe nature and walking meditation."*

**Recreational program recommendations:** *"I would recommend assisted activities and 2 hours of yoga weekly."*

Following the intervention, the subject returned to herself and understood that she is the most

important character in her life. Recreation is a road towards oneself.

#### **Case study number 10**

**M. T.** is 52 years old, trainer. Following the evaluation of the *recreation interests* the following ensue: the subject uses for recreation the passive interests category. The subject does not involve in activities from the active recreation category.

With regard to the program *Attitude towards recreation and spending the spare time* the subject worked, on average, 40 hours per week, and in recreation 20 hours. On a scale from 1 to 10, the satisfaction in connection to the life style and the spare time spending was 6. Regarding the *social and family support*, the subject is satisfied with the quality time spent with the family

The *limits which block the recreational activities* where knowing exclusively people with similar interests and that is why she considers that she lacks motivation for other activities.

The *desires to plan the spare time* are active interest like mountain and sea outings.

#### **Recreation program intervention**

The recreation program intervention's purpose was to increase awareness of the risk degree with regard to health, as well as to improve the connection with recreation.

**Changes following the practice of the activities:** *"I am all right, balanced."*

**Improving the connection with recreation:** *the subject states that she has "a good connection with recreation."*

**Applying recreational activities to improve the satisfaction regarding life style and recreation:** Chinese gymnastics.

**Recreational program recommendations:** *"life stories, discussions, movies, theatre, classical music."*

Following the intervention, the subject mentions that she is satisfied with the connection with the recreation, she wants to improve active skills like practicing sport and she is also interested in art-therapy.

#### **V. Discussions**

The analysis of the above cases shows the contribution of the recreational program intervention and confirms the hypothesis of the research, namely that participating to this program may be positively associated with an improved connection with recreation and a better inner balance. The subjects

became increasingly aware of the connection with recreation and its importance; they enhanced their recreational skills and decided to continue to take action in order to continuously improve themselves. They also became aware of the importance of planning the recreation in their daily agenda, recognised their needs and asked to be taught. Moreover, they discovered their creative resources and found methods to plan recreational activities.

#### **VI. Conclusions**

Through training sessions and activities of spare time spending within the recreational program, the participants in the research were guided in order to benefit from a life of recreation, health and inner balance.

The evaluation is mandatory for each working adult; the recreation monitoring should be part of everybody's development and become a life style. Publishing good practices guides in order to relax represents a necessary aid for the adult generation actively involved in the work field.

The recreation programs represent mandatory resources among the adults. Recreation is a resource of welfare and inner balance not only for adults, but also for all ages.

Planning the recreational activities must become a lifestyle for every individual. Moreover, reducing the number of working hours can lead to results regarding an improvement of life's quality.

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