

LEISURE AND THE SENIOR CITIZEN

Minnie Bell and Leonard R. Miller*

In retirement, free or leisure time of an older person may provide his first opportunity for creativity and social and civic services. Society has the responsibility to help make such opportunity available. "Time-killing" amusements and "do-good" activities provide little satisfaction for anyone. A sound, balanced program can offer opportunities for self-expression, service and pure enjoyment of living.

Involvement in program or activity is the key to success in use of leisure time with senior citizens. A display or exhibit of creative activities, changed periodically, can stimulate experiments with familiar or with new activities. The opportunity to "do with" or "participate in" can also stimulate involvement.

Good activities for leisure are almost limitless. Some of the following activities may aid in more effective planning for profitable use of leisure time by the aging.

Creative Activities

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| Clay modeling | Crocheting |
| Sculpturing | Carving |
| Ceramics | Painting |
| Jewelry | Sketching |
| Plastics | Textile painting |
| Sewing | Singing |
| Decoupage | Reading to others |
| Mending | Caring for a bulletin board |
| Quilting | Gardening (flower and vegetable) |
| Rug making | Whittling |
| Toy making | House plants |
| Cooking | Hobby shows |
| Music | Bazaars |
| Drama-charades | Bird watching |
| Pantomimes, puppetry, story telling | |
| Knitting | |

Physical Activities

Physical activities can be selected for each individual; they are not taboo for the senior citizen.

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| Nature walks | Table games |
| Walking | Table tennis |

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| Picnicking | Dancing (square and social) |
| Fishing | Trap shooting |
| Hunting | Swimming |
| Outings | Croquet |
| Photography | Shuffleboard |
| Camping | Sailing |
| Bicycling | Shelling nuts |
| Deck tennis | |

Social Service Activities

An older citizen can derive fuller satisfaction from leisure time if he is doing something for someone else or working with another person.

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| Visiting (individual and points of interest) | Editing a newsletter |
| Adopt-a-pal | Institutional services (as folding bandages) |
| Sewing and mending for others | Special celebrations, birthdays, holidays |
| Making toys for children | Church attendance |
| Shopping | Short trips and pleasure drives |
| Grooming | Movies, slides |
| Reading | Book reviews |
| Letter writing | Special services for community activity |
| Listening | Stuffing envelopes |
| Serving as a host | Telephoning |
| Community and church drives | Toy repair |

Activities based on the felt needs and interests of the older person are more rewarding. These activities are for senior citizens and others to share with them. Senior citizens should involve themselves in program planning of these activities. Avoid any semblance of charity or paternalism in offering the programs. Making decisions and being creative and useful are most rewarding uses of leisure time by senior citizens.

REFERENCES

- Begin Now To Enjoy Tomorrow*. Mutual Benefit Life Insurance Co., Newark, New Jersey, 1957 edition.
- Williams, Arthur. *Recreation In The Senior Years*. 1962. Available from the National Recreation Association, New York City. \$3.95.

*Respectively, Extension specialist in family life education and recreation specialist, Texas A&M University.

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION WORK