



University of Pennsylvania
ScholarlyCommons

Master of Applied Positive Psychology (MAPP) Capstone Projects Master of Applied Positive Psychology (MAPP) Capstones

8-1-2022

Communitas: Building Community through Leisure and Collective Joy

Louise Wo
louisepanwo@gmail.com

Follow this and additional works at: https://repository.upenn.edu/mapp_capstone



Part of the Arts and Humanities Commons, Community Psychology Commons, Leisure Studies Commons, Recreational Therapy Commons, and the Social Justice Commons

Wo, Louise, "Communitas: Building Community through Leisure and Collective Joy" (2022). *Master of Applied Positive Psychology (MAPP) Capstone Projects*. 231.
https://repository.upenn.edu/mapp_capstone/231

This paper is posted at ScholarlyCommons. https://repository.upenn.edu/mapp_capstone/231
For more information, please contact repository@pobox.upenn.edu.

Communitas: Building Community through Leisure and Collective Joy

Abstract

Relationships and belonging are fundamental needs for well-being. At the same time, our culture is becoming increasingly individualistic and loneliness is pervasive. Our traditional community and relational frameworks, such as religious institutions and associations, are also diminishing. This capstone explores leisure as a possible pathway for building social capital and community well-being. We will look at why leisure activities based in recreation, play and the humanities have the capacity to build community and enduring connections with others, while also having individual well-being benefits. This capstone features some exemplary groups that utilize leisure activities and have built strong communities through positive psychology constructs such as hive psychology, self-efficacy, collective effervescence, mattering, resilience and belonging. We will explore opportunities to overlap the fields of positive psychology and leisure in both research and application. We will remind ourselves that joy and belonging are powerful forces and even more powerful when they come together.

Keywords

Positive psychology, leisure, humanities, community, play, recreation, art, culture, community well-being

Disciplines

Arts and Humanities | Community Psychology | Leisure Studies | Recreational Therapy | Social Justice

Communitas: Building Community through Leisure and Collective Joy

Louise P. Wo

Master of Applied Positive Psychology Program, University of Pennsylvania

MAPP 800: Capstone Project

Advisor: Jan Stanley

August 1, 2022

Abstract

Relationships and belonging are fundamental needs for well-being. At the same time, our culture is becoming increasingly individualistic and loneliness is pervasive. Our traditional community and relational frameworks, such as religious institutions and associations, are also diminishing. This capstone explores leisure as a possible pathway for building social capital and community well-being. We will look at why leisure activities based in recreation, play and the humanities have the capacity to build community and enduring connections with others, while also having individual well-being benefits. This capstone features some exemplary groups that utilize leisure activities and have built strong communities through positive psychology constructs such as hive psychology, self-efficacy, collective effervescence, mattering, resilience and belonging. We will explore opportunities to overlap the fields of positive psychology and leisure in both research and application. We will remind ourselves that joy and belonging are powerful forces and even more powerful when they come together.

Keywords: Positive psychology, leisure, humanities, community, play, recreation, art, culture, community well-being

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	4
POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY DEFINITION	8
Community Well-being	11
THE NEED FOR COMMUNITY	14
Our need for relationships	14
Our need for social connectedness	16
Belongingness in society	18
UNDERSTANDING LEISURE	23
Leisure Throughout History	23
Leisure and Individual Well-being	26
Participatory Leisure: An Introduction	29
Participatory Leisure and Community Well-being	33
Individual and Community Resilience	41
Leisure and Mediating Identity	43
SOCIAL PRESCRIPTION: A POSITIVE INTERVENTION	47
FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES	49
CONCLUDING THOUGHTS	51
REFERENCES	54

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Jan Stanley, I am deeply grateful for your encouragement and support this whole year. From our first getting-to-know-you Zoom chat, to our lunch in Denver, to our numerous meetings as you advised me during this capstone, you have always been affirming and encouraging of me. I feel so lucky you were randomly matched as my journal reader and I'm so excited for the ways we'll connect in the future. I can't wait to continue to learn from your wisdom and to be inspired by you. You're stuck with me!

MAPP team, to say you crafted an environment of support and flourishing is an understatement. You have forever changed my perception of what a learning environment can look like and have helped heal many stories I have around academics and intelligence. Thank you, James Pawelski, Leona Brandwene, Nicole Stottlemeyer, Laura Taylor, Aaron Boczkowski, all of our amazing instructors and lecturers and of course, Marty Seligman. I am honored to carry on the work of this field.

MAPP 17team, holy moly we did it! Never could I imagine that I would feel bonded for life to 38 people that I know primarily through Zoom. You are all an inspiration to me in more ways than you'll ever know. I am forever in your corner cheering you on for how you will change the world through positive psychology. I couldn't have imagined this journey through MAPP without each and every one of you. I love you all so much.

To my larger community that includes my family, my circles of friends and my various past and present communities: I wouldn't have devoted this whole capstone to community if it weren't for all of you. You all played a part in encouraging all my (many) creative passions that led me to connect the ideas of community well-being and leisure. My village is strong!

Thank you to the groups who I spoke with who are included in this capstone: Bojan Mandaric and Jason Shaw from November Project; Nick Heizen and Tom Palladino from the San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus; and Brigid Costello from the Society of Creative Anachronism. Your stories are the heart of this capstone and I am so grateful to have your organizations as shining examples of what it looks like to cultivate community based in participatory leisure.

INTRODUCTION

I looked around, took a deep breath and felt an immense amount of contentment. It was the last day my small community group was practicing in this location. After having our classes in this location in the Sunset neighborhood of San Francisco, our teacher found another spot that would provide more space and equipment for our movement practice. Movement culture is a unique exploration of movements of all sorts (Hayes, 2018). In any given class, you could find our teacher, Johnny, training us in handstands, balancing, doing a partnered activity, strength training, crawling on the ground like lizards, or other movement patterns. Our classes could look strange to others, but we fit right in with the other physical activity enthusiasts who were practicing nearby. Over the past six months in 2021 we had grown to be part of a little community that also utilized this space for their activities. It was a paved space that included a basketball court, playground equipment and an open flexible area that could be used for a variety of activities. For three mornings a week our teacher would take 10-20 of us through a movement practice session while a few feet away a large group of senior Asian women would do a dance fitness class together. On the other side of us would either be a group playing basketball or some kids playing together. This had become our world each morning since our classes were moved outside due to the pandemic.

At the end of the last day Sean and Arista, two of my movement classmates, handed out Chinese baked goods to the senior Asian women to show their appreciation for sharing the space with us over these last few months. I felt immense gratitude for my community of movement practitioners and happiness that we were able to share this space with such a variety of different kinds of people in my city. It's moments similar to this and many others I've had that make me think about how shared activities seem to bring people together in a unique way. Whether it be

an activity that is movement-based, creative, or expressive, 'leisure' activities have the capacity to connect and mediate unique interactions between people.

Much of my life has been marked by two phenomena: the communities I belonged to and the personal growth from practicing various recreational and creative activities. Whether it was participating in church youth group, being part of a fitness community that I will discuss later, or my current movement practice group, my life and well-being would not be where it is today without these experiences. Each experience has expanded my worldview, sense of self and helped me to feel like I belong somewhere. These experiences make me wonder how the sense of community and belonging can be connected to participating in activities related to recreation, leisure and the humanities. My being in the MAPP program has only given me a deeper curiosity that has driven me to explore it further in this capstone. I know that these experiences have impacted my well-being in a meaningful way but how and why? What about these experiences stand out for me? Might this be true for others, too? To explore this further I knew I would have to look beyond my own experiences and to explore through a lens of positive psychology.

This Capstone is an exploration of the relationship between the two elements of creating community and participating in leisure activities. On the surface this Capstone is going to seem as though it's about doing fun activities. And while that's true it's about so much more than that. It's about how our well-being can be impacted individually and collectively through joining with others in activities that bring us joy. We are going to examine why well-being is a construct that is impacted by our relationships and our social structures. We are going to look at examples of how communities based in leisure have the capacity to bring people together in a unique way. This capstone is going to be an exploration of community and how it contributes to a life well lived.

POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY DEFINITION

Positive psychology is the scientific study of what makes life worth living. It emerged formally as a field in 1998 when Martin Seligman, the then president of the American Psychological Association, announced it in his Presidential address (Peterson, 2006). Prior to this time, since World War II, psychology primarily had a deficit-based approach that focused on treating psychological disorders. Great strides had been made in treatments and the understanding of mental illnesses such as bipolar disorder, depression, and schizophrenia but Seligman felt this focus came at a cost. The disease model focuses so much on what is wrong with the human condition that it neglects to understand what can go right (Seligman, 2011). Positive psychology attempts to correct this imbalance with the perspective that human strengths and goodness are just as valid as human deficits and flaws. The absence of disease isn't the same as a flourishing life.

One might hear about positive psychology and expect that it is only learning about happiness but it extends far beyond that. There are several models of well-being that have been well-researched in the field of positive psychology that include multiple elements. PERMA is the foundational theory of well-being that was first introduced by Seligman and contains five elements: positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning and achievement. The psychological well-being model (PWB) is another model that states well-being is derived from autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, personal relations, purpose and self-acceptance (Ryff & Keyes, 1995). The subjective well-being measure is one's perception of their life and includes positive emotion and life satisfaction (Diener et al., 2002). Each element includes many constructs that have been scientifically studied and validated by hundreds of

researchers and scientists. Well-being is a multifaceted construct that is continuously being expanded upon as the field moves forward.

The understanding of positive emotions and the good life, informed by research, takes numerous approaches. Barbara Frederickson is a researcher known for the broaden-and-build theory which theorizes that the experience of positive emotions broadens and builds a person's cognitive, social and emotional resources (Frederickson, 2009). Positive emotions such as joy, curiosity, serenity can lead to upward spirals and can guard against the stress of life. While emotions such as anxiety and fear may elicit narrow, survival-oriented behaviors. Frederickson's research suggests that doing activities that intentionally work towards positive emotions could be beneficial for one's well-being.

Understanding happiness and the good life has also been heavily informed by philosophy. The concept of hedonic happiness is first mentioned by philosophers in ancient Greece (Peterson, 2006) and eventually expands to the notion of living a life maximized by pleasure, comfort, security, and stability (Oishi & Westgate, 2021). Also pulling from the teachings of another ancient Greek philosopher, Aristotle, eudaimonic happiness is characterized by meaning and purpose and cultivating virtues in service of the greater good (Peterson, 2006). Someone who has a job that is rich in meaning such as in healthcare may experience eudaimonic happiness but less hedonic happiness because of the challenges they face. More recently, the good life has expanded into the understanding of psychological richness which is a life that contains novel experiences, variety and perspective change (Oishi & Westgate, 2021). Psychological richness occurs through experiences such as learning about something new, expanding your worldview, and challenging your skills, such as that through experiencing the humanities (Westgate & Oishi,

2022). The variety of perspectives shows that positive psychology is a dynamic, multidimensional construct.

Positive psychology approaches well-being as something that can be learned. Positive traits such as grit, virtues, and optimism are not fixed in each person and can be cultivated through awareness and practice. Early in Seligman's career, he conducted an experiment that led to the concept of learned helplessness (Seligman, 1990). The experiment showed that helplessness can occur when a subject is made to believe that their actions will not affect the outcome. If someone is taking a pottery class and feels they aren't as naturally gifted as the other students they may decide to give up on completing the class. Much like how helplessness can be learned, optimism can also be learned by challenging negative self-talk and changing explanatory style. An optimistic person's explanatory style would explain negative events as due to temporary circumstances, impermanent, or specific. The same person who feels they aren't as natural of a potter could see that their skills are a temporary state that has the ability to grow. How one can learn explanatory style and other ways to cultivate flourishing are examples of how positive psychology goes beyond mere theory through the practice of moving past a deficit-based perspective.

While positive psychology is a field of study, positive interventions aim to go beyond theory by enhancing well-being through intentional activities. Positive interventions can happen through *increasing the preferred* or *decreasing the dispreferred*, or both (J. Pawelski, personal communication, September 4, 2021). Increasing the preferred can look like cultivating positive traits such as pleasant affect, strengths and connections with others. Decreasing the dispreferred can involve treating mental illness or be the absence of harm. For instance, increasing the preferred could be strength training while decreasing the dispreferred could be an appendectomy.

There are many factors to consider with each individual situation to determine the proper positive intervention.

The importance of considering everyone's unique situation is demonstrated in Schueller's (2014) idea of Person-Activity Fit. This approach argues that an individual's preferences, context, and situation be taken into account when determining which positive intervention is most appropriate. An idea that takes the idea of individual fit further is Pawelski's (2020) Elements Model. Pawelski (2020) posits more interventions could be conceptualized if we were to break down positive interventions into their specific components or elements rather than conceiving them as whole units. The Elements Model determines the proper positive intervention by assessing the elements for the person it is intended for in the following order: desired outcome, target system, target change, active ingredient and activity (Pawelski, 2020). The five elements allow for customization of positive interventions by considering that every person could possibly have different values which would lead to different ways that elements are selected or assessed. If two different people have the same desired outcome the positive intervention that is ultimately assigned may be different. The Elements Model methodology can be applied to interventions of many sorts, including leisure activities, the focus of this capstone.

Community Well-being

Positive psychology research has focused primarily on the individual but there is a move towards a community-based approach. Isaac Prilleltensky argues that wellness is not possible without examining systems of power and recognizing that it is both psychological and political (Prilleltensky, 2008). Wellness cannot exist without fairness and it starts with recognizing that political structures and power dynamics play a part in research and interventions. Community

psychologists like Prilleltensky study how power may be used to enable or inhibit access to resources, to promote social change, or to maintain the societal status quo (Prilleltensky, 2008). Prilleltensky's I-COPPE model for wellness asserts that wellness has multiple dimensions including interpersonal, community, occupational, physical, psychological and economic. Prilleltensky posits that the different dimensions dynamically interact and support each other (I. Prilleltensky, personal communication, October 1, 2021). Prilleltensky further explored how well-being is shaped in community contexts in his book *How people matter* where he makes the argument that humans have a need to add value and to be valued within a bigger context.

There is also a call within the field to do more research on the constructs of flourishing outside of the western perspective. Different cultures have different values in what makes for the good life and for happiness. For example, one study showed that European Americans tend to have an optimistic bias towards expecting that positive events will happen to them, while Japanese tend to have a pessimistic bias towards expecting that negative events will happen to them (Jeglic et al., 2016). This suggests the possibility of different perspectives between individualistic and collectivist cultures. As the United States is also becoming increasingly ethnically and culturally diverse, positive psychology will need to consider these different cultural approaches to advancing research.

Positive psychology is also expanding into other domains such as that of Positive Education and the Positive Humanities. Positive Education combines traditional education principles with research-informed practices of well-being. Positive Education has seen much success in countries such as Australia where many schools are looking to expand into this approach (Slemp et al., 2017). Approaches in Positive Education can include weaving resilience and character strengths into school curriculum (Seligman et al., 2009). The Positive Humanities

is an emerging field that studies the relationship between culture and human flourishing (Tay et al., 2017). The young field explores how disciplines within the humanities such as the arts, literature, film, music and theater can contribute to thriving. Positive psychology is a field that can offer value to many other areas of study and domains, making for endless possibilities and potential for impact. The movement in the field beyond an individual's well-being will continue to add depth and breadth to its research and applications.

THE NEED FOR COMMUNITY

Our need for relationships

Relationships are a key component of human well-being and are heavily studied in the field of positive psychology, as relationships can affect subjective well-being or one's perception of life satisfaction and emotions. Our relationships contribute highly to our well-being (Gable & Gosnell, 2011). Our first relationships are formed with our caregiver and can inform our relationships in adult life through our attachment style. Attachment theory theorizes that humans have two needs in relationships: safety and exploration (Haidt, 2006). How one responds to these different needs is expressed in attachment style. An anxious attachment style is signified through the expression of distress and a need for reassurance (Haidt, 2006). An avoidant attachment style is demonstrated through the suppression of distress and aloofness (Haidt, 2006). A secure attachment is the child's knowing that a caregiver will take care of their needs and will result in play and exploration (Haidt, 2006). A secure attachment is cultivated through love, affection and responsiveness from a caregiver and is the most optimal for a child's well-being. For a child to have the best chance of well-being when they are at an age where they can't provide for their own needs, a secure attachment must be cultivated.

Depriving an infant or child of touch and affection can have devastating consequences. A 2020 article in *The Atlantic* chronicled the effects of the orphans in Romania who were part of the communist regime in the 1970's and 1980's. The article featured Izidor, who at the age of 11 was adopted from Romania to the Ruckels family in San Diego. After the last communist dictator was assassinated American researchers were sent by the Romanian government to research the orphanages that were similar to the one that Izidor was a part of. The orphanages

were dirty and the children were not cared for, resulting in many having diseases and developmental disorders. If that wasn't enough the children were deprived of touch and were kept from interacting with other orphans. Some of the effects of living without proper touch and affection can be seen in what Izidor's life looks like today. The article summarizes the tumultuous relationship with his adoptive family, leading him to ultimately estrange himself from them at age 18 with very few other social connections to this day (Greene, 2020). While Izidor is able to live independently unlike 75% of the other orphans from Romania, he has not been able to foster connections that can lead to flourishing. A thriving life goes beyond merely existing or surviving and if a secure attachment style is not cultivated it may affect one's ability to have relationships that lead to flourishing.

As adults our attachment figures may carry over into our relationships with our romantic partner, for better or worse. Research suggests that those who are married are typically happier (Keyes & Haidt, 2003). Happily married couples are less likely to experience health problems (DeLongis et al., 1988). While marriage can offer benefits such as acceptability of following a social expectation and more financial stability, the relational benefits can include interpersonal intimacy, increase in coping effectiveness and companionship (Diener et al., 2000).

Our relationships in adulthood also extend to that of our friends. Having friends that live in proximity of less than a mile has been shown to be beneficial for well-being and happiness (Fowler & Christakis, 2008). Positive relationships can be enhanced when we capitalize on positive news with active engagement and enthusiasm (Gable & Gosnell, 2011). Relationships are an important, and if not the most important part, of life satisfaction and well-being. Most people mention close relationships when asked what brings meaning to life (Emmons, 1999) yet, many of us lack close social ties. About 20 percent of people report loneliness as a major source

of unhappiness in their lives (Smith, 2017). In 2004, a General Social Survey asked Americans how many people they had discussed important matters with and the most common response was zero (Smith, 2017). It's no surprise that relationships are a major focus of the study of positive psychology and well-being.

As humans, we will interact with many people throughout our lives in countless settings. Some of those interactions will create enduring relationships. How those relationships are created is not by chance or simply existing in proximity with each other. Instead, lasting relationships of all contexts that promote well-being are fostered through secure attachments and behaviors that demonstrate love, safety and a concern for the needs of others.

Our need for social connectedness

Emile Durkheim, who is considered one of the founders of sociology, released a piece of work in 1897 that was groundbreaking for its time. In *Suicide* he examined the factors that are present for those that commit suicide. Through his findings he argued that more than just individual emotional and psychological conditions lead people to end their lives. He posited that in traditional societies such as that of feudal Europe there were more social structures in place that gave people a sense of where they belonged in society. He found that social integration had a profound effect on buffering individuals from the dangers of suicide. For example, Catholics and Jews had a lower rate of suicide compared to Protestants because of their stronger emphasis on social cohesion rather than that of individual work ethic (Durkheim, 2005). Countries where individualism is highly valued such as the United States, Canada and Europe have higher rates of suicide than countries with collectivist cultures. The more social structures a person is a part of

the more likely they are to be protected from suicidal ideation. In other words, the more someone feels as though they belong, the better their well-being.

The belonging theory posits that humans have a fundamental human motivation to maintain strong, interpersonal relationships (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Belonging is a drive that is satisfied through frequent, meaningful interactions with others within the context of an enduring framework where there is a concern for each other's welfare (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). The desire to create and maintain social bonds has survival and reproductive benefits rooted in evolution. Living in groups would increase the chances of survival for people whether that be protection against enemies or sharing the responsibilities of raising children.

Belongingness is distinct from that of the need for social contact. The need to belong satisfies two major criteria (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). The first is frequent interpersonal contact or interactions with others that are mainly pleasant and positive. The second is that there is an interpersonal bond or relationship that is marked by the perception of stability, affective concern, and continuation into the foreseeable future. Frequent contacts are able to occur easily when there are circumstances that naturally enable this. Proximity can contribute to frequent interactions with others as well. It is not enough to simply exist in a community to have well-being, meaningful connections that foster belonging are also essential.

Belongingness is not just essential in buffering against suicide, it is a major part of living a flourishing life. Public health experts understand that social connectedness is one of the most powerful determinants of our well-being. The evidence for strong interpersonal relationships on mortality risk is on par with other well-established research on health risk factors including smoking, alcohol consumption and physical exercise (Frederickson, 2016). People that are socially connected get sick less often and can increase their chances of living a long, healthy life.

The DDB Needham Lifestyle Surveys, which measures social trends in the United States, were combined into a single index of happiness with life and was described in Putnam's *Bowling Alone*. Putnam found that marriage and attending college had links to happiness equal to quadrupling and doubling your income, respectively. These findings allowed him to assess correlations between happiness and various forms of social interaction and what he found was quite interesting. Being involved in a group on a regular basis such as volunteering, entertaining or church attendance brings about happiness that is equivalent to that of obtaining a college degree or doubling your income (Putnam, 2020). Regular connections rival marriage and affluence as predictors of life happiness.

Belongingness in society

Belongingness happens within structures which can change throughout our lives. When I was growing up in a suburb of Colorado I had several close friends who lived within walking or biking distance. I would spend evenings and weekends jumping on my elementary school best friend, Jenny's, giant trampoline. In middle and high school I made a group of friends through a church youth group and they became my community until we graduated high school. Even though I was a racial minority in my hometown I felt like I belonged through my group of church youth group friends. For many of us that grow up in suburbs or towns in the United States our childhoods share similarities. We found community through our schools, neighborhoods or our recreational activities.

As adolescents we are in systems that allow for community belonging to more easily occur. In childhood, we often go to school with the same children, moving from elementary school, to middle school to high school. Throughout childhood and adolescence, we are often

placed in activities through our education system or community recreation programs.

Approximately 83% of adolescents participate in at least one extracurricular activity (Hancock et al., 2012). Sometimes we are enrolled in these activities out of our own interests or because our caregivers feel they will be beneficial to our development. We often build close relationships with other participants in these activities. Our educational institutions continue to provide opportunities for recreation that are based in group learning and experiences as we move into university settings. I attended the University of Colorado at Boulder where we had a cappella singing groups, the Bhakti Yoga Club, the Alpine Club and the Crochet Club to name a few. We have various opportunities as adolescents and young adults to feel as though we belong.

However, as we transition to adulthood, our focus turns to building our careers, maintaining our families, and the task of living as a functional contributing member of society. As children or young adults we are surrounded by peers who are going through a similar phase in life. In adulthood we lose this and tend to only be proximate to those whom we share an occupational environment. The opportunities to engage in recreational activities become less available. Participation in sports, exercise, and recreational physical activities is generally low among US adults, with exercise being the most prevalent (Ham et al., 2009). We can infer that participation in activities with other people is even lower.

Community and gathering have decreased over a wide range of activities. Despite population growth in the United States there is not a correlation of participation in community frameworks. In the United States one of the most common community frameworks has been that of religious institutions. For most of the past three hundred years, 35 to 40 percent of the population has participated in congregations with some degree of regularity (Putnam, 2020). In the 1950's church attendance saw its highest participation. However, survey evidence and

denominational reports show a 10 percent decrease in church membership between the 1960s and 1990s. This diminishing has had an effect on other group-based frameworks as nearly half of all associated memberships in America are church-related.

Religious institutions are not the only community frameworks that are seeing a decrease in participation. Associations and voluntary organizations for the purpose of civic participation are another prominent community framework. These organizations span the spectrum of social and civic purposes and include everything from the Parent-Teacher Association to Animal Nutrition Research Council to the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP). The number of organizations and associations doubled between 1968 and 1997 to over 22,000 and it's tempting to assume that these numbers indicate an increase in community involvement. Membership is usually regarded as a measure of community involvement (Putnam, 2020). Upon closer examination we can find that a majority of the organizations do not focus on regular connection between their members or do not even have individual members. For example, all that is required to be a member of the AARP is paying an annual fee.

The organizations that see the most community involvement are chapter-based with regular meetings and opportunities for members to participate in community-based activities. Examples include service clubs like Kiwanis and Rotary and the League of Women Voters. Kiwanis clubs have regular meetings where they review the programs they are fundraising for. Barely one in four citizens' groups founded after 1975 had chapters with individual members (Putnam, 2020). For the organizations that don't have local chapters, members don't have a bond to each other and are unaware of each other's existence. Their ties may be to that of common ideals but not to each other.

On top of these diminishing frameworks, we are becoming a more transient society. American Survey Data finds that someone aged 18 can expect to move 9.1 times in their remaining lifetime (United States Census Bureau, n.d.). In the United States, over 20% of people report moving within the country in the last five years, as opposed to 5% in countries such as China and Venezuela (Esipova et al., 2013). In the past it was more likely that one stayed near the area they grew up in making it easier to stay connected to close family relationships and friendships that have been cultivated since childhood. In more recent years it has not become uncommon for people to move away in young adulthood to start new lives or have different experiences outside of their familiar setting. While moving to a new location can offer many opportunities for work and experiences it can contribute to challenges to finding community.

We are also becoming an increasingly more individualistic society. Individualism promotes a view of the self as self-directed, autonomous, and separate from others. Collectivism is the idea of the self as overlapping with close others, such that one's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors are embedded in social contexts. Individualism in a society can be characterized by smaller household sizes, socioeconomic development, educational attainment, divorce and more. Individualism has increased globally across a majority of countries for the past 50 years (Santos et al., 2017) with the United States ranking the highest with a 91 individualism score (Načinović Braje et al., 2019). Collectivism is associated with low relational mobility where relationships are expected to be more permanent and stable (Hokkaido University, 2018). People who participate in individualistic cultures like in the United States are less likely to maintain stable, enduring relationships.

While these trends and participation in certain community frameworks is decreasing it doesn't necessarily mean that humans have less of a desire to belong to groups. It suggests that

traditional ways of gathering are becoming less relevant as we move into modern society.

Traditional frameworks such as religious institutions and associations are becoming less significant but are there other frameworks that build structures of belonging? What reasons can we find to come together with others on a regular basis? What activities can bond us meaningfully to create lasting relationships?

UNDERSTANDING LEISURE

Leisure Throughout History

Even as we move into a more globalized world the need for community and belonging will endure. How do we intentionally build structures of belonging when so much of our culture does not support it? Our past might give us some clues. Humans have been a communal species for as long as we have been in existence. Göbekli Tepe is a prehistoric site located in modern-day Turkey that existed over 11,000 years ago (Dietrich et al., 2012). The ruins that were uncovered between 1994-1999 revealed monumental architecture with huge, T-shaped pillars arranged in circle-like enclosures around two even taller central pillars. The pillars are interconnected by walls and stone benches and are decorated with varied animal motifs, including foxes, snakes, scorpions, boars, aurochs, gazelle, wild ass and birds, as well as, in some cases, arms and hands, showing that they are sculptures representing stylized human-like individuals. This may not seem like unusual information to learn about an ancient group but 11,000 years ago was prior to civilization and permanent settlements. This was a time when humans lived in nomadic small hunter-gatherer small groups. Why would such an ornate structure be built when the people at the time didn't so much as have a permanent place to settle? And how was it possible to construct something that must have required the resources of a large group?

There is a strong theory that has been informed by other discoveries of the site. The ruins from the site reveal a feasting hall and a beer kiln that was likely used for celebrations and gatherings. The site excavation uncovered ruins that were for communal and ritual use (Dietrich et al., 2012). The communal and ritual gatherings were likely used as ways to bond with other

tribes so that trust could be fostered to collaborate to build the structures, and eventually to build permanent settlements. Dare say that this civilization came out of...fun? Even though this was 11,000 years ago, the people of Göbekli Tepe knew something that we seem to forget sometimes: building your community is important and it's better to do that through fun.

Figure 1

Dietrich, O., Heun, M., Notroff, J., Schmidt, K., & Zarnkow, M. (2012). The role of cult and feasting in the emergence of neolithic communities. new evidence from göbekli tepe, south-eastern turkey. Antiquity, 86(333), 674–695. <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0003598x00047840>



Göbekli Tepe: overhead view of the main excavation area (photograph: N. Becker).

As prehistoric societies developed, ancient civilizations continued to gather through shared rituals, practices and enjoyment. In ancient Greece and Rome the specialization of leisure developed alongside social classes. As the upper classes gained power and wealth they acquired more time to enjoy activities or entertain. The ancient Athenians cultivated practices in the arts, learning and athletics but they were mainly restricted to those of a higher class. Education and religious festivals occurred 70 days throughout the year where the arts, poetry, theater, gymnastics and competitions were on display. (Hurd et al., 2021).

The Middle Ages was marked by the collapse of the Roman Empire which resulted in a dark period. The Catholic church emerged as a source of power and placed emphasis on work rather than leisure. The early Christians condemned everything that the Romans had stood for including their hedonistic way of life. Many aspects of leisure that had become a way of life for the Romans were forbidden during the Dark and Middle Ages such as the stadiums, amphitheaters and baths (Hurd et al., 2021).

The Renaissance transitioned western society from the medieval period into the modern age throughout Europe. This period was marked by a resurgence of the arts, philosophy and a renewed freedom of thought and expression. Different forms of play and activities became part of the education system during the Renaissance such as physical exercises, games, the performing arts, and visual arts. As European settlers established colonies in America in the 17th century they brought their attitude towards leisure with them. While the nobility or an upper class did not cultivate the arts as in previous times, the Calvinist religious perspective was the biggest hindrance to its development. Young people would be fined or even publicly whipped for idleness, gambling, dancing or other activities. For the Sabbath work, travel or recreation was strictly prohibited on Sundays.

In our modern times, leisure falls under the umbrella of many different constructs and ideas, even spawning its own field of study. The words recreation, leisure and play are used interchangeably. In culture and society it can fall in the categories of travel and tourism, entertainment, the arts, health and fitness programs, hobbies, spectator sports and more (Hurd et al., 2021). Leisure has been researched within fields of sociology, history and psychological well-being. While leisure can be defined broadly and within many contexts, we will be analyzing it mainly from the western perspective.

Researchers have defined leisure a number of ways including how time is spent when not doing paid or unpaid work or obligations (Roberts, 2006), preferred activities during free time for their own sake (Argyle, 1996), free time to deliberate about physical and spiritual yearnings (Pieper, 1963), a state that is characterized by freedom and intrinsic motivation (Iso-Ahola, 1979), and a multidimensional construct that describes a subjective state of mind and activities (Edginton et al., 2001). Much like how the definition of leisure isn't straightforward, neither has been society's relationship with it. There have been times when leisure was considered a waste of time such as when certain Christian movements came into prominence. How leisure activities transpire and affect an individual or community context can also be very different.

Leisure and Individual Well-being

When someone looks at the definition of leisure, they may wonder why someone would choose to spend some of their precious time on something that doesn't seem to have tangible benefits. A leisure activity doesn't necessarily make money or seemingly provide something that is essential for human life. Why isn't every waking moment devoted to life-essential tasks?

For precisely the reason that leisure activities are not done out of obligation is how it uniquely impacts one's sense of self. Freely performed activities are perceived to be a more accurate representation of one's sense of self than compulsory or externally assigned activities (Haggard & Williams, 1991). Someone who reads a book per week may be more likely to define readers with descriptions such as: curious, focused, and love to learn. Leisure activities that one freely chooses may reinforce a positive self-image.

Freely performed behavior is self-regulated behavior that is derived from intrinsic motivation (Brown & Ryan, 2012). Intrinsic motivation is included in self-determination theory which posits that motivational orientations have an influence on behavioral regulation and psychological well-being. Self-determination theory includes a spectrum model of regulation, with amotivation on the left and intrinsic motivation on the right. Intrinsic motivation is associated with positive outcomes such as creativity, enhanced task performance and greater well-being (Brown & Ryan, 2012). These activities are selected because they are enjoyable for their own sake, rather than external outcomes, cultivating a greater sense of well-being.

Leisure activities can provide physiological health benefits that contribute directly to subjective well-being, both directly and in perception. Leisure that includes physical activity such as exercise or sports can directly decrease the risk of coronary heart disease (Penedo & Dahn, 2005). There is strong evidence that exercise and physical activity may also have health benefits for individuals who are improving from certain conditions. A study done on older individuals who have hip-knee osteoarthritis showed improvements in physical function and reductions in the perception of pain improvement when they participated in a water-based program (Penedo & Dahn, 2005). Leisure well-being is a construct that indicates satisfaction with leisure life contributes directly to subjective well-being. This theoretical model argues that

leisure well-being is mostly determined by leisure activities that have value derived from benefits related to basic needs such as safety, health, economic, sensory, escape, and sensation-seeking benefits (Sirgy et al., 2016). Some people may evaluate health benefits when evaluating a leisure activity prior to or after engaging. For instance, if someone plays a game of tennis they are more likely to experience leisure well-being if they perceive the activity to provide health benefits. The perception of health benefits contributes to satisfaction with the activity. While also providing benefits to the body, directly as well as in perception, leisure activities that involve physical activity can stimulate endorphins that lead to positive emotions, serving as a protective factor from mental illness (Sirgy et al., 2016). For those that experience depression and anxiety, multiple studies indicate that physical activity improves mood and reduces symptoms (Sirgy et al., 2016).

A deeper look into how leisure affects subjective well-being beyond physiological benefits suggests that there are positive psychological benefits. Serious leisure is a construct within leisure studies that posits that serious involvement of effort, skill, and commitment to a leisure activity leads to greater life satisfaction (Stebbins, 1992). When people navigate a situation that requires effort and challenge, they are more likely to increase their sense of mastery (Maddux & Kleiman, 2021). Whether one chooses to navigate a situation at all may require a certain level of self-efficacy, which is one's belief in their ability to produce desired outcomes (Maddux & Kleiman, 2021). Serious leisure can provide an appropriate balance of skill and challenge which is more likely to invoke a mastery experience. This appropriate balance enables an individual to enter into a state of flow leading to optimal experience and well-being (Newman et al., 2013). Flow is the experience of total absorption and enjoyment during an activity (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). The psychological inclination towards mastery experiences is possibly

due to humans' motivation to be competent, regardless of what they are doing (Peterson, 2006). Psychologist Robert White (1959), argued that growing competence provides rewards at the moment that are enough to sustain the effort over time. If you can sense that you are improving at salsa dance, you will feel competent and be motivated to continue in your classes to continue your progress. While you are continuously improving you are more likely to enter into a state of flow and feel a sense of mastery (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990).

Participatory Leisure: An Introduction

Andrew Peterson had his sights set on qualifying for the Boston Marathon. Growing up in Indiana, Andrew had a strong talent and love for running and was well on his way to qualifying for the renowned race. However, he had unique challenges that other runners did not – Andrew was born with fetal alcohol syndrome which caused permanent brain damage and an intellectual disability. As a child, he was placed in foster care until he and his three siblings were adopted by Craig Peterson. Craig nurtured Andrew's interest in running and it led to Andrew receiving multiple gold medals in the Special Olympics. After he fell short just 44 seconds on his third attempt at qualifying for The Boston Marathon, it was clear that a creative solution was needed. While a talented and fast runner, Andrew struggled to keep himself at a consistent pace of under seven minutes per mile. At times he would run too fast and tire himself out; other times he would forget to refuel and hydrate himself on the course.

Andrew had been a part of the Indianapolis chapter of November Project a free community fitness group that is in over 60 cities around the world for the last couple years. Prior to joining, Andrew's father, Craig, approached the Indianapolis co-leader, Jason Shaw, to make sure that his son would feel accepted and included, as this had not been the case when Andrew

joined other running groups. Craig and Andrew became dedicated core members of the Indianapolis chapter and it was here that Craig asked for help. He asked Jason if there was a member in the November Project community who would be able to run a marathon at a 6:40 pace who could run alongside Andrew at his next qualifying marathon attempt. This person would serve as his pacer and would make sure that Andrew stayed on course, refuel and take care of himself as needed.

Jason was determined to find a person that could pace Andrew. After realizing that no one in the Indianapolis chapter would be able to keep that pace he reached out to the community of global November Project leaders of the 60+ cities who put the call out in their chapters. “I got some great responses. People said, listen, I can't run a sub three (hour marathon). I could run a half marathon in an hour and a half so maybe I'll run the first half and then I'll get another person from another city to come in and do the second half.” Jason shared with me during our conversation (J. Shaw, personal communication, June 14, 2022). Finding one person that could keep up with Andrew's pace was proving to be difficult but Jason and all the other co-leaders were determined to find someone, even fundraising for this person to come to Indianapolis and providing them a place to stay. Eventually, a member of the Wisconsin chapter named Justin Dyszelski responded that he was willing to do it and it would be no problem to run at that pace.

Craig spoke to Justin twice on the phone and before they knew it, Justin was on a plane to Indianapolis. Craig trusted that as someone who was part of the November Project community that he and Andrew had grown to trust and love, Justin would be able to help Andrew accomplish his dream of running the Boston Marathon. Justin and Andrew met on the day of the marathon and they were off and running (literally). Justin could intuitively sense when Andrew was running too fast and would tell him to pull back when needed. He acted as Andrew's guide

for that 26.2 miles and at the halfway point, Andrew was running faster and on pace than he ever had. He finished the marathon with seven minutes to spare in the qualifying time. Andrew became the second Special Olympics athlete ever to qualify for the Boston Marathon and the first in over 30 years.

Figure 2

Knapp, C (2017) From Early Trauma to the Boston Marathon: Andrew Peterson's Story.

[Photograph]. Special Olympics Indiana. <https://soindiana.org/from-early-trauma-to-the-boston-marathon/>



Justin Dyszelski (left) and Andrew Peterson (right)

This story brings me to tears and is an example of how powerful it can be to be part of a trusted community. November Project and several other groups are examples of how leisure experiences can contribute to well-being in a way that exceeds individual constructs of well-being. My perspective is influenced by a communitarianism approach to leisure which was summarized by leisure scholars, Susan Arai and Alison M. Pedlar (2003).

Communitarianism emphasizes trust, mutuality and cooperation as an orientation from individual liberty towards collective liberty and justice. Communitarianism concepts include social justice as a foundation and the idea of a responsive community or one whose moral standards reflect the basic human needs of all its members. Communitarians emphasize the fact that humans are social beings and there is a political need to focus on communal cultural practices.

Arai and Pedlar (2003) explain that communitarianism is a possible response to our current cultural crises in North America that have been exacerbated by globalization which prioritizes individualism. Individualism can fail to address our need for interdependence, and our relationship to others and society. Individualism and a focus on self-interest can contribute to distrust that leads to negative outcomes in society. The notion of “leisure as consumption” is one outcome that is based in individualism and stresses the individual benefits, choice and autonomy that come from engagement. Examples of leisure as consumption can be seen in how art is susceptible to reproduction for the masses, therefore privatized and consumed on an individual, rather than communal basis.

Arai and Pedlar (2003) go on to describe Albert Borgman’s alternative to the leisure as consumption perspective in his guide *Crossing the Postmodern Divide*. “Leisure as meaning.” is the idea that leisure pursuit is motivated by the common good and shared interests. The practice

of the leisure is the means or main experience rather than an end goal that is derived from something outside the participants. For example, a group of people who come together to play pickleball for the enjoyment of the experience rather than to get “better.” This kind of engagement approaches the participation of the activity as both the means and ends. This kind of leisure is “leisure in meaning” and is practiced in communal contexts.

Communitarians believe in a kind of leisure that brings people together around practices of shared meaning, also known as “focal practices.” Focal practices engage the mind and body so that among a group of individuals ‘there is an immediate and centering power of the focal thing they are devoted to.’ (Arai & Pedlar, 2003). The specific examples I will be sharing reflect my interpretation of groups that practice “leisure in meaning” and “focal practices.” The groups practice activities that are participatory in nature and are specifically carried out by one’s own volition with others. The people who are participating in the activity are not acting as a passive or audience member. Playing on a recreational volleyball team is considered participatory while watching a theater show is not. I will be discussing groups that all share the distinction of being participatory in nature. They all share the commonality that community amongst the members is of equal or similar importance as the activity they are engaging in.

Participatory Leisure and Community Well-being

We build trust and familiarity with people over time. In our fast-paced society we can come across hundreds of people a day but there’s a small chance that we will intentionally see most of those people again. When I first moved to San Francisco over twelve years ago I was excited to be in a vibrant city but it was challenging at first to find community. I would meet people by chance in public or at a social event but our interactions would end there. How can one

find spaces to regularly see people and build the trust that comes with a sense of belonging? The mere exposure effect is the psychological phenomenon that people develop a preference or likeability for things because of familiarity (Moreland & Zajonc, 1982). We tend to like and eventually trust those that we have repeated exposure to. Outside of an occupational environment, there are limited opportunities to repeatedly interact with a group of people. Meeting people repeatedly on its own is not enough to build meaningful relationships, but rather we need to connect with people with whom we share values. For instance, many religious institutions have regular gatherings at a certain time, such as Sunday mornings for Christian churches. There is an unspoken understanding that the people that attend a Christian church service share similar values.

Groups that are based around a leisure activity are one such possibility to finding community that allows for ongoing connections. From the day a new city chapter of November Project starts the outdoor workouts happen on a weekly basis no matter what. Yes, even if there is snow, rain, or hail. The workouts start once a week on Wednesday mornings and then may expand to Mondays and Friday mornings as the group grows. In the past, a November Project greeting from another person consisted of a hug, rather than a handshake, whether or not you've met the person before. Once it's time, one of the co-leaders asks for everyone to gather around to do what is called the bounce, a ritual of sorts to signify that a workout is starting and to create a moment of cohesion (Ducharme, 2016) (Carter, n.d.).

When I was a part of the San Francisco chapter I had a busy travel schedule that made for a very inconsistent routine. It was comforting to know that when I was home that there was something regular that I could attend where I would be greeted with friendly faces. I knew that I could get high fives and words of encouragement after doing burpees and to grab breakfast after

the workout with a bunch of people if I desired. I could post in our Facebook group and ask if anyone had a resource for something I was looking for or to see if someone wanted to join me for a fun activity that weekend. It was unlike other exercise classes I experienced that cost money where no one speaks to each other throughout the whole class. I always felt a knowing that anyone I'd come across would be health conscious, friendly and trustworthy because the values of the community are mutually upheld by all members of the 60+ chapters (*Community Agreements*, n.d.). Through this foundation of trust and repeated contact with the same group of people I grew some of my closest friendships that still thrive to this day.

Another example of a group that has regular gatherings built into their programs is the San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus (SFGMC). The SFGMC was founded in 1978 during the gay rights movement by gay pioneer, Jon Reed Sims, and is the first chorus to have the word 'gay' in its name. Their first public performance was just one month later, the night mayor George Moscone and Supervisor Harvey Milk were assassinated. Today, the Chorus includes 250 members and are renowned for their mission to create extraordinary music and experiences that build community, inspire activism, and foster compassion at home and around the world (San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus [SFGMC], n.d.). They were the subject of the 2019 documentary *Gay Chorus Deep South* which won the coveted Audience Award at the Tribeca Film Festival that year. The documentary chronicled their tour in the deep south that was in response to the 2016 election and the wave of anti-LGBTQ laws that were sweeping the Southern states. They are one of the most respected arts organizations in San Francisco and their influence extends beyond that as they are credited with starting the gay choral movement (Lee, 2013).

The SFGMC has regular rehearsals on Monday evenings where you can find them preparing for one of three shows a year. The practices and the subsequent performances are a

powerful bonding experience between the members. SFGMC member, Nick Heizen says, “Whenever you're singing in harmony with somebody, it's that exchange of energy and that witnessing of someone else; feeling comfortable enough to be witnessed and to be able to share and to be really held in just like that physical practice of coming together and, and creating something together that you really can feel. It's unmatched.” (N. Heizen, personal communication, June 1, 2022). The experience of being in sync with those around you is a concept known as hive psychology. Psychologist Jonathan Haidt, posits that humans have the ability to temporarily transcend self-interest for something larger than ourselves (Haidt, 2012). The act of gathering in a group has the capacity to create an “inter-social” dynamic which Emile Durkheim describes as the experience of being a part of a whole (Haidt, 2012). This dynamic can pull everyone into the higher realms of the sacred or profane, which give us the feeling that there is something higher than our day-to-day lives and where collective interests give rise over individual pursuits. Whether it’s doing a bounce with hundreds of other fitness enthusiasts while chanting “Good morning!” or singing beautiful choral music with a group of people who share your same identity, there is an undeniable shared sense of community that comes with a hive psychology experience.

The hive psychology experience can produce a feeling of collective effervescence, a term coined by Emile Durkheim (2016), when he observed the ways in which religion moved people to a unified consciousness. Barbara Ehrenreich provides a history of collective effervescence in her book *Dancing in the Streets* (2007), chronicling everything from indigenous tribe rituals to modern examples like sporting events and the Woodstock music festival. This kind of collective behavior is essential to strengthening the bond of a community. Tom Palladino, SFGMC’s member president explains his own experience of collective effervescence, “The most salient

example for me is when I had first joined the chorus in 2015. For our Pride concert series that year we did an Elton John sing-a-long and one of the songs was “Can you feel the love tonight.” The opening performance happened to be on the Friday when the Obergefell v. Hodges decision came out that legalized gay marriage across the country. And it was the most powerful experience to be a singer on stage, to be in a community, and a sold out house shows up to hear a stage full of gay men sing. It was a great privilege to be able to sing on that day and memorialize that moment.” (T. Palladino, personal communication, June 30, 2022).

While gathering with others can provide a feeling of being with a whole, it can also expand the sense of self. “There's something around modeling. By your leader, but also by the other singers. The practice of failing or attempting, not for the sake of getting it right, “ says Nick Heizen, “Like in the choir, if I don't know the song I might not sing as loudly, but if I do know it I'll sing more loudly and I can hear people listening next to me. Or if they know it well, I'll hold back and listen to them. There's sort of that unspoken exchange or learning, or if I sing the wrong note, I don't feel shame around it. It's just a part of the process of learning because we'll do it again. And then I'll now know, and we'll both sing louder together. There's something around the safe space that's created when you're in process.” (N. Heizen, personal communication, June 1, 2022). How Nick describes his experience of rehearsals for SFGMC is self-efficacy in action. As we learned earlier, self-efficacy is one’s beliefs in their ability to produce desired outcomes (Maddux & Kleiman, 2021). Self-efficacy can be influenced through a variety of experiences such as that of vicarious experiences, or our observations of the behavior of others. We can gain self-efficacy by consistently participating in an activity with others in a trusted environment and learning from those around us which can also be affected by how

similar we feel we are to the person we are observing. In the case of the SFGMC, they all share a commonality of identifying as men in the LGBTQ community.

The Society for Creative Anachronism (SCA) is another example of self-efficacy in action. The SCA is an international organization of medieval enthusiasts that consists of thousands of members who gather in their “kingdoms” on a regular basis through themed events. The themed events are organized through the members and can range from beekeeping, weaving, weapon throwing, archery, equestrian activities, and beyond. The SCA allows for people of all backgrounds and interests to engage over shared interests and curiosities as it relates to medieval times. As much as the organization is about engaging in fun events and putting on medieval dress, it’s about people coming together to learn from each other and to create shared experiences. “People are so passionate about sharing knowledge, skills, and resources, but that also means that people are very open to learning and that puts you in a place of vulnerability. If you feel vulnerable and yet you feel safe, that creates a sense of connection,” says Brigid Costello, SCA member, “Particularly when you've got people who are passionately interested in pockets of pre-16th century culture, arts, and lifestyle. So people being unashamedly happy to nerd out, It’s a vulnerable thing but it’s done with joy.” (B. Costello, personal communication, July 5, 2022). This “nerding out” together is the very environment that is both conducive to flourishing relationships and self-efficacy at the same time.

All the leisure groups I have discussed so far demonstrate the importance of mattering which Isaac Prillelensky describes as being valued and giving value (Prillelensky, 2021). Oftentimes, our institutions motivate people to contribute through extrinsic motivation such as obligation, monetary compensation, or fear. Yet, studies done on motivation suggest that the more external regulation the less interest or effort is shown for a task (Ryan & Deci, 2000). The

groups that utilize participatory leisure demonstrate that people are driven to add value to a community they care about if it is one that fosters belonging and joy. All the co-leaders of 60+ cities at November Project are volunteers, often for years at a time, planning workouts and being the primary example of the community's values for their chapter. Members of November Project often choose to organize events outside of the workouts and contribute in ways such as volunteering to help with maintaining the website or taking pictures at large events. In the SFGMC there are various committees that the members can lead or be a part of. They range from being a mentor to new members in their Big/Little program, the Divas who is their drag troop that raises money for their financial assistance network, the Easy Bake Coven which is a group that enjoys putting on bake sales to fundraise as well. You can also join smaller ensembles such as The Lollipop Guild and the HomoPhonics which perform at events on behalf of the Chorus. Members of the SCA share their interests with the other members by organizing events and learning from each other. While there is an organizational structure to all the groups, they wouldn't function without the contribution of the members. No one is forced to give of their time and resources, they do so willingly because they want to give back to a community that tells them that they matter.

This notion of mattering in a community is also shown through the recognition of its members. All the communities I have discussed achieve this through their rituals. Every few months or so November Project co-leaders in each chapter present the Positivity Award to a member they feel has exemplified the community values. The award is given out generously on a regular basis and is a wooden oar handle with November Project branded on the side, a symbolic nod to the co-founders' background (Ducharme, 2016). When the person is presented the award at the end of a workout they are praised for qualities such as being encouraging of other

members, providing carpool rides to workouts, or demonstrating a positive attitude that has inspired others. They are awarded for contributing to the community. At the end of each SFGMC season their Annual Volley Awards recognize the members for their commitment and sacrifice to be a part of the Chorus. Awards and certificates are given to members for demonstrating various behaviors such as volunteer leadership, multi-year support of the SFGMC mission, and outstanding artistic contribution. In the SCA, when someone is officially welcomed as a member to the kingdom, they receive the Award of Arms. Rather than doing the same ceremony for each new member the experience of each person receiving the Award of Arms is personalized. Each kingdom in the SCA has their own nobility structure that can include kings, queens, barons, baronesses, princes, and princesses with their own coronation ceremonies to signify that they will take on the duties of their new title. These ceremonies are not only acts of celebration; they are moments to say that the members of this community matter.

Rituals tend to take place for significant events such as weddings, baptisms and baby showers. These events are wonderful opportunities to celebrate and we all surely have fond memories from attending a family's wedding or a dear friend's birthday party. While it's important to commemorate important rites of passage such as the above mentioned, there may be well-being benefits to partaking in community-based rituals. Rituals have long been a powerful social mechanism that connects people, spanning from indigenous ceremonies to modern examples seen in religious institutions or sports games (Hobson et al., 2017). Taking part in a ritual enhances the affiliation one feels to the group that can be linked to cooperation, social cohesion, and perceived social support (Hobson et al., 2017). In other words, they cultivate feelings of belonging. Participating in rituals is more meaningful when it's done with a community of people we have shared experiences with and have grown to trust. If we aren't part

of something like a religious institution, how do we experience feelings of group unity? Perhaps, 'leisure in meaning' is one such pathway to doing so.

Individual and Community Resilience

Individual resilience is a construct that is heavily studied in positive psychology and much like other constructs, there are varying definitions according to the researcher and study being conducted. We can define it as the capacity for positive adaptation in significant adversity (Cutuli et al., 2021). Resilience can be influenced by characteristics and strengths that are both internal and external to the individual, including that of connection and relationships. Being part of a caring community can extend your resources and resilience protective factors beyond your immediate friends and family (Southwick & Charney, 2012). In a religious community it wouldn't be uncommon for help to be extended to meet certain needs of the individuals of the community (Law, 2020).

Going beyond individual resilience, community resilience is composed of qualities or characteristics that allow a community to survive or even thrive following a collective trauma. Community resilience goes beyond individual responses to a challenge but results from the unique capacities a community embodies prior to experiencing a hazard. How November Project responded to finding a pacer for Andrew demonstrates a collective effort that can only be found in a trusted community. Social capital is a key component in a specific community resilience model and includes three elements: social support, social participation, and community bonds (Norris et al., 2007). These three elements include informal networks of family and friends, formal social networks with groups and organizations, and community bonds through participation in group and community activities (Sherrieb et al., 2010). All the communities I

have discussed so far all demonstrate social capital as an element of their capacity for community resilience.

Around Memorial Day 2021, Jason Shaw, the co-leader of November Project Indy, who was instrumental in helping Andrew find his pacer, found himself in a situation he never expected. It was supposed to be a typical day that started off with his regular run but something was different. He felt unfamiliar chest pains that gradually got worse as the day progressed, eventually with him coughing up blood at the end of the day and unable to move. At the urging of his girlfriend he begrudgingly admitted himself to the hospital and was given news that he never thought was possible as a healthy, active 41-year old man. He had a heart attack from a 90% blockage and would need double bypass open heart surgery. He was shocked, to say the least.

The November Project Indy community immediately jumped in to help out where they could. There were several members of the community who happened to work at the hospital and were able to inform Jason through text of his surgery time before his nurses even did, as well as comfort him with knowledge of what to expect. The surgery was successful, but recovery was not going to be easy. Jason wasn't able to do anything independently and while his dad, sister and girlfriend had become his caretakers the members of the November Project Indy community stepped in to help as much as possible. They organized meal trains, brought books over for him to read, and even started a GoFundMe to help cover his deductible. "I don't know what I would've done without them (November Project Indy)," said Jason to me when he recounted the experience, "My dad, sister and my girlfriend were my caretakers but to have other people to help them out because otherwise it'd be them making every dinner, doing all the dishes, everything. I couldn't use my hands for anything so I literally had to have everybody do

everything for me and it gave them some relief. It's a lot and stressful for everyone involved, not just the person who is sick and being cared for. The person caring for them needs assistance too.” (J. Shaw, personal communication, June 14, 2022).

A number of the kingdoms within the SCA have disaster coordinators that respond to emergencies that happen in the areas where their members are located. Recently, the storage facility for a kingdom in Newcastle, Australia burned down which included all the equipment for their events. There are groups all over Australia and New Zealand who are currently making items to donate ranging from thrones to tablecloths so the Newcastle kingdom can gather again as a community. A few years ago in the SFGMC, an older member named Ross had liver cancer and was in need of a liver transplant. He had spent years petitioning the hospitals for a match to no luck. He put an ask out to the Chorus to find a match by going through a series of tests and it turned out that one of the younger members named Dave was a match. He happily donated half of his liver, saving Ross' life. Both members are currently thriving with their respective half liver.

While western culture promotes individualism and the ability to “pull yourself up by the bootstraps”, the truth is, we are all going to need help someday. We are not meant to do life alone. No matter how self-sufficient we become we are all going to inevitably need the support of others, and maybe the support of *many* others. We all need our village.

Leisure and Mediating Identity

“I view my coming out process in three stages: to myself, to my friends and my family, and when I joined the chorus. And I say that in that context, because that third iteration was because of the relationships that I developed in the chorus,” said Tom Palladino (T. Palladino,

personal communication, June 30, 2022). Tom's experience of joining the chorus exposed him to a diverse group of gay men that he had never experienced before. They were successful, funny, talented and people he wanted to emulate. While finding belonging is essential for everyone, it is of specific importance for those who do not have a mainstream identity. We hear stories too often of those who have harmed themselves as a result of feeling rejected from society or family for not following societal norms because of their identity. Could participatory leisure be a mechanism that helps those that don't feel as though they belong to find their community?

The San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus is not the only example of the LGBTQ+ community forming their own place of belonging utilizing participatory leisure. Ballroom culture is a subculture that was founded mainly by Black and Latino gay men and trans women in the New York City area in the 1980's. The documentary film *Paris is Burning* (1990) depicts this subculture through interviews and footage and is the basis for most of the following paragraph. Those involved participate in gatherings known as ball competitions where contestants enter in a specific category or theme where they must "walk", similar to that of a fashion model on a runway. Contestants are judged on criteria including their audience likability, dance talent, their costumes, and the accuracy of the category they portray. For example, the category "school boy or school girl" comprises of the contestants portraying interpretations of a private school student. Those who competed in ball competitions were a part of "houses" which served as surrogate families for those who were outcast from their friends and family for their sexual orientation and gender expression. Ballroom competitions were a safe space for those in this community to express themselves and find joy in a world where they otherwise didn't feel accepted or seen. The impact of this subculture eventually extended far beyond the underground scene in New York City. Houses expanded to all parts of the northeast United States, as well as Chicago and

Oakland, California. A dance style known as vogue dance originated in the ballroom scene, is characterized by a ball walker who freezes in glamorous poses that are inspired by cover models in magazines. The recording artist, Madonna, would later bring vogue dance into the mainstream through her music video *Vogue* which was choreographed by and included well-known dancers from the ballroom scene (Hess, 2020).

There are many other examples of how leisure has played a part in bringing together those who feel marginalized. Capoeira is a martial art form that was developed by enslaved Africans in Brazil in the 16th century (Goncalves-Borrega, 2017). It has elements of dance and acrobatics and is the only martial art that is accompanied by music. Capoeira developed from oppression and as a means for the formerly enslaved to defend themselves from being kidnapped and enslaved again. It gave the practitioners a way to develop mastery after having their agency taken away from them by Portuguese colonizers. It was an activity that was developed and practiced within community, with several groups of formerly enslaved people establishing settlements called quilombos. Quilombos were large communities that stood as strongholds against the Portuguese where capoeira was practiced for defense as well as leisure. Today capoeira is practiced all around the world as a non-combative, recreational activity.

I saw capoeira practiced for the first time when I was attending university and the experience left me completely enraptured and energized. The two capoeiristas in the middle were elegant and strong at the same time. Their interplay looked as though they were communicating to each other without words – one capoeirista would kick their leg towards the other with total control and never with the intent to strike the other person. It was done with an invitation for the other capoeirista to respond with their own movement, turning the exchange into a dance and a

conversation. This experience led me to join a capoeira community over ten years ago in Denver where I trained and made some great friends.

Having a disability is also another form of marginalization that can lead one to feeling more socially isolated and lonely than those who are non-disabled (Emerson, 2021). When Chelsie Hill was 17 years old she became paralyzed from the waist down from a car accident. Chelsie had been a competition dancer her whole life and while she was devastated she knew she would find a way to dance again. She organized a dance showcase with some women she met from the wheelchair community and the idea for an all women's wheelchair dance team was born. Today, The Rollettes perform at festivals and expos all over the country and they host the Rollettes Experience each year, bringing together women from all over the globe for a week of dance classes and socializing, regardless of experience, age or ability (Norlian, 2020). While Chelsie still maintains friendships outside of the disabled community she considers the women in The Rollettes as "family" (Murray, 2017). The Rollettes use dance as a "focal practice" to build bonds with their community, creating a place where they belong and can express joy. While all these women could live life just fine on their own, a community like this enables them to thrive.

The possibilities for how leisure can bring people together are endless. While it can inspire a whole underground subculture to emerge or support those with a marginalized identity, it can also do so in subtle ways, such as building bonds between people who form a science-fiction book club. Yielded the right way, leisure can be a tool to build community and provide a place of belonging. The implications for this are exciting and the opportunities for how well-being can move forward is ripe with possibilities.

SOCIAL PRESCRIPTION: A POSITIVE INTERVENTION

In recent years we have seen leisure being applied as interventions for community well-being in parts of the world. The social prescribing movement aims to address social needs related to mental health through non-clinical approaches. Originally developed in the UK, social prescribing involves a process connecting individuals to non-clinical services and activities, typically provided by the voluntary and community sectors (Morse et al., 2022). As of 2021, 17 countries have taken on social prescribing initiatives. There are a variety of ways that social prescriptions are provided ranging from social workers, primary care physicians, and community social services. Link workers work with the provider to co-design a non-clinical social prescription to improve a patient's health and well-being (Morse et al., 2022). Some of the solutions that have been prescribed include addressing basic living needs, lifestyle interventions such as exercise programs, professional development or social activities like arts and crafts, nature activities, and volunteering. We are just at the beginning stages of seeing social prescription take shape in different countries around the world. There is much opportunity to use positive psychology to inform social prescription initiatives that utilize participatory leisure towards better well-being and mental health. What could it look like to operationalize community-based social prescription initiatives for different demographics and needs? There is one initiative that might give us some insight.

There is a social prescription intervention that has shown promise at addressing feelings of social disconnectedness in men. The well-being of men and males has been a social concern due to research that indicates that men have poorer health outcomes than women and girls; especially that of men from marginalized groups, remote or rural areas, as well as men with disabilities and limited education (Wilson & Cordier, 2013). Men's Sheds originated in Australia

as a response to the need to address the health disparities of men through supportive social contexts while simultaneously providing opportunities to learn practical skills and develop interests. Activities in Men's Sheds can involve activities such as carpentry, gardening, pottery, social outings, and art. There are over 900 Men's Sheds located across Australia and they can also be found in the United Kingdom, Ireland, United States, Canada, Greece, Finland and New Zealand. A narrative review of literature suggests that Men's Sheds contribute positively to men's subjective well-being through adult learning, social inclusion, meaningful engagement, and mentoring (Wilson & Cordier, 2013). Men with mental health problems, substance addictions, or at retirement age seem to particularly benefit from this kind of informal learning environment rather than more traditional environments. A particular study stated that Men's Sheds provide a unique social location for older men and a place where they can 'belong' once they retire. There has been limited research done on the impact of Men's Sheds including the range of variables that might contribute towards best practices (Wilson & Cordier, 2013). A recent qualitative study concluded that Men's Sheds could be a complementary route for male health improvement that exists alongside formal public healthcare services (Kelly et al., 2021). However, as Men's Sheds are typically volunteer led, there would need to have regular support to enable continuous delivery and adequately address the health needs of men.

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

In 2012, psychologist Teresa Freire edited the book *Positive Leisure Science* (2012) to consider how leisure could be embedded into positive psychology. The authors were challenged with looking at leisure through the lens of human optimal functioning. The book calls for a need to disseminate this field and to clarify the concept of leisure through a positive perspective. Similar to the ways in which Positive Education and the Positive Humanities are bringing together different domains for the purpose of advancing our institutions towards well-being approaches, Positive Leisure Science could be a branch of psychology that gives us a different path to change our culture and society. Leisure exists from the individual to the macro-social level and the possibilities to develop more bodies of research from a psychological lens are vast. An analysis of journal articles show that leisure is not quite yet a distinct topic as it relates to positive psychology research (Freire, 2017). Both fields have developed in parallel rather than crossing paths. There is great opportunity to overlap the two fields.

I have shared several examples in this capstone of how participatory leisure can address community well-being and belonging with a positive psychology lens. I've highlighted exemplary groups that I have come across and there are surely more. There is an opportunity to study exemplary groups formally with a positive psychology and leisure studies perspective. Studies could examine the qualities that the groups have in common and what their practices entail. Controlled experiments could be done on existing groups by introducing variables in their practices to increase feelings of belonging with their members. Controlled experiments could also be done with people who are experiencing loneliness and assigning different interventions, including those that have a social and community component. These experiments could

operationalize how participatory leisure could be utilized in positive psychology-based interventions.

Operationalizing participatory leisure would also require collaboration from communities and the locations in which they are based. How could a city or town enable leisure groups to flourish and have the resources they need? Other community frameworks such as religious organizations and associations have formal infrastructure to establish themselves as legal entities – what might a similar process look like for leisure groups, if at all? Could a city or town create communal spaces similar to the location where I practice movement culture, where leisure and recreational activities would be encouraged? What would it look like for someone to be aware of groups they can participate in for their well-being, such as a centralized database or registry? I happened to find out about November Project by chance through a housemate but what if we didn't leave knowledge of information like that to chance?

While well-being would be one key aim for operationalizing participatory leisure measurement strategies would need to be defined to determine its effectiveness. As we've discussed, well-being is a construct that has many definitions and ways of measuring. Well-being is a multidimensional construct that is not always so straightforward to measure. Researchers would have the task of determining which elements to measure and whether these results are generalizable. While these opportunities are complex they are worthy of exploring and studying.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

“All right, everyone, time’s up!” I said as I stood up on a chair and looked over the group. The last strums of music dissipated as the various pairs and trios wrapped up their practice. Everyone piled into a group to start the showcase part of our evening. What transpired for the rest of the evening was magical. Just an hour and a half ago 30+ people had gathered in this space, an art studio I had rented for the night. Everyone in attendance was a hobbyist musician or a singer that heard about the event through me or word of mouth. My goal was to create a space where people could come together and collaborate with others who had a passion for music; people like myself. I placed everyone in a trio or pair – Sasha who played guitar was paired with Parmita, a singer. Mairin who was a violin player was paired with Nathalie who played ukulele and was also a singer. Each pair or trio had only the hour and a half to workshop a song together and perform it for our showcase portion of the evening.

By the time the showcase portion started the group had grown to 60+ to include friends who showed up to support and be entertained. I served as emcee, introducing each of the pairs and trios for their performances. We were serenaded with pop songs, classics and recognizable anthems that we could all sing along. Each performance would end with thunderous applause and support from the audience. Given that most of the pairs or trios didn’t have pre-existing relationships and had only an hour and a half to workshop their song, none of the performances were “perfect.” Yet they were perfect because each one contributed to a sense of collective joy and left each performer completely lit up from within. It was deeply meaningful to create a space to see everyone shine and be supported in a context such as this.

The experience of being with others cultivated a sense of well-being that would not be possible if we would have each been at our homes that night practicing our respective

instruments or singing alone. There is something that feels unexplainable when we gather with others through shared activities. However, positive psychology can offer some of that explanation.

As we move into a more globalized world all signs point to society becoming more and more individualistic. While our diminishing traditional community frameworks are pushing us to spend more time alone, our need for social connections and belonging does not cease to exist. We must look to other ways to gather with others and find ways to belong that are relevant and meaningful to us. Leisure can offer us a pathway to finding and creating such community.

Leisure can offer us individual well-being benefits that are physiological and psychological. Through leisure, we can reinforce a positive self-image, experience flow and improve our cardiovascular health. We're able to experience psychological richness through trying different activities or gaining mastery in a specific activity. But as we've seen throughout this capstone, leisure has the capacity to cultivate well-being beyond that of the individual.

Leisure has the ability to connect us with others through shared experience that builds our social capital. Groups that are based in leisure offer regular times for members to gather and build relationships of trust over time. We can connect with those with whom we share values. Practicing together builds our self-efficacy in a way that wouldn't if we were practicing alone. We can feel as though we matter through our contributions to the group. Through leisure we can even find a place to belong if we have a marginalized identity.

The times I've practiced my leisure activities within community are some of my happiest and most memorable times as an adult. Whether it was me participating in school choir, practicing handstands with my movement group, or workshopping a song on my ukulele with someone I just met. These activities tap into that part of me that feels like a kid playing on the

playground with other kids. When I am playing and doing a fun activity with others, I don't care about their job and they don't care about my political affiliation. We aren't concerned with looking "cool" or impressing each other. We aren't trying to compete with or tear the other person down for our own gain. We are just humans together: present and in our full, uninhibited expression. As we grow into adulthood, we seem to forget that we are all just big kids at heart. We want to belong and to feel that we are not alone in this world. And to have a darn fun time doing it.

References

- Arai, S., & Pedlar, A. (2003). Moving beyond individualism in leisure theory: A critical analysis of concepts of community and social engagement. *Leisure Studies*, 22(3), 185–202.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/026143603200075489>
- Argyle, M. (1996). *The social psychology of leisure*. Penguin Books.
- Baumeister, R. F., & Leary, M. R. (1995). The need to belong: Desire for interpersonal attachments as a fundamental human motivation. *Psychological Bulletin*, 117(3), 497–529. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.117.3.497>
- Brown, K., & Ryan, R. M. (2012). Fostering healthy self-regulation from within and without: A self-determination theory perspective. In *Positive psychology in practice* (pp. 105–124). John Wiley & Sons, Inc. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470939338.ch7>
- Carter, L. (n.d.). *The Bounce* [Blog post]. November Project. Retrieved August 2, 2017, from <https://november-project.com/the-bounce/>
- Community Agreements*. (n.d.). November Project. <https://november-project.com/community-agreements/>
- Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1990). *Flow: The psychology of optimal experience* (1st ed.). Harper & Row.
- Cutuli, J. J., Herbers, J. E., Masten, A. S., & Reed, M.-G. J. (2021). Resilience in development. In C. R. Snyder, S. J. Lopez, L. M. Edwards, & S. C. Marquez (Eds.), *The oxford handbook of positive psychology* (3rd ed.). Oxford University Press.
<https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199396511.013.9>

- DeLongis, A., Folkman, S., & Lazarus, R. S. (1988). The impact of daily stress on health and mood: Psychological and social resources as mediators. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 54(3), 486–495. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.54.3.486>
- Diener, E., Gohm, C. L., Suh, E., & Oishi, S. (2000). Similarity of the relations between marital status and subjective well-being across cultures. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 31(4), 419–436. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022100031004001>
- Diener, E., Lucas, R. E., & Oishi, S. (2002). Subjective well-being: The science of happiness and life satisfaction. In C. Snyder & S. J. Lopez (Eds.), *The handbook of positive psychology* (pp. 63–73). Oxford University Press.
- Dietrich, O., Heun, M., Notroff, J., Schmidt, K., & Zarnkow, M. (2012). The role of cult and feasting in the emergence of neolithic communities. new evidence from Göbekli Tepe, south-eastern Turkey. *Antiquity*, 86(333), 674–695.
<https://doi.org/10.1017/s0003598x00047840>
- Ducharme, J. (2016, August 21). *Who runs the world? November project*. Boston Magazine.
<https://www.bostonmagazine.com/health/2016/08/21/november-project-2/>
- Durkheim, E. (2005). *Suicide: A study in sociology*. Routledge.
- Durkheim, E. (2016). The elementary forms of religious life. In *Social Theory Re-Wired* (pp. 52–67). Routledge.
- Edginton, C. R., Jordan, D. J., DeGraaf, D., & Edginton, S. R. (2001). *Leisure and life satisfaction: Foundational perspectives with powerweb: Health & human performance* (3rd ed.). McGraw-Hill Humanities/Social Sciences/Languages.
- Ehrenreich, B. (2007). *Dancing in the streets* (Unabridged ed.) [Audiobook]. Blackstone Audio Inc.

Emerson, E., Fortune, N., Llewellyn, G., & Stancliffe, R. (2021). Loneliness, social support, social isolation and wellbeing among working age adults with and without disability: Cross-sectional study. *Disability and health journal*, *14*(1), 100965.

Emmons, R. A. (1999). *The psychology of ultimate concerns: Motivation and spirituality in personality* (1st ed.). The Guilford Press.

Esipova, N., Pugliese, A., & Ray, J. (2013, May 15). *381 million adults worldwide migrate within countries*. Gallup. <https://news.gallup.com/poll/162488/381-million-adults-worldwide-migrate-within-countries.aspx>

Fowler, J. H., & Christakis, N. A. (2008). Dynamic spread of happiness in a large social network: Longitudinal analysis over 20 years in the framingham heart study. *BMJ*, *337*(dec04 2), a2338–a2338. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.a2338>

Frederickson, B. (2009). *Positivity: Groundbreaking research reveals how to embrace the hidden strength of positive emotions, overcome negativity, and thrive*. Crown.

Fredrickson, B.L. (2016). Love: Positivity resonance as a fresh, evidence-based perspective on an age-old topic. In L.F. Barrett, M. Lewis, & J.M. Haviland (Eds.), *Handbook of emotions, 4th edition* (pp.847-858). Guilford Press

Freire, T. (Ed.). (2012). *Positive leisure science: From subjective experience to social contexts*. Springer Science & Business Media.

Freire, T. (2017). Leisure and positive psychology: Contributions to optimal human functioning. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, *13*(1), 4–7. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760.2017.1374445>

- Gable, S. L., & Gosnell, C. L. (2011). The positive side of close relationships. In *Designing positive psychology* (pp. 265–279). Oxford University Press.
<https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195373585.003.0017>
- Goncalves-Borrega, J. (2017, September 21). *How Brazilian capoeira evolved from a martial art to an international dance craze*. The Smithsonian.
<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smithsonian-institution/capoeira-occult-martial-art-international-dance-180964924/>
- Greene, M. F. (2020). *30 years ago, Romania deprived thousands of babies of human contact* [Article]. The Atlantic.
- Haggard, L. M., & Williams, D. R. (1991). Self-identity benefits of leisure. *Benefits of leisure*. *Benefits of leisure*, 103–120.
- Haidt, J. (2006). *The happiness hypothesis: Finding modern truth in ancient wisdom* (1st ed.). Basic Books.
- Haidt, J. (2012). *The righteous mind* (3rd ed.). Random House Digital Inc.
- Ham, S. A., Kruger, J., & Tudor-Locke, C. (2009). Participation by us adults in sports, exercise, and recreational physical activities. *Journal of Physical Activity and Health*, 6(1), 6–14.
<https://doi.org/10.1123/jpah.6.1.6>
- Hancock, D., Dyk, P., & Jones, K. (2012). Adolescent involvement in extracurricular activities. *Journal of Leadership Education*, 11(1), 84–101. <https://doi.org/10.12806/v11/i1/11/rf5>
- Hayes, S. (2018, August 7). *The viral video star behind the fitness fad that may replace crossfit*. The Atlantic. <https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2018/08/ido-portal-the-player/566687/>

- Hess, L. (2020, March 27). *Strike a pose! Why Madonna's "Vogue" is still relevant 30 years later*. Vogue Magazine. <https://www.vogue.com/article/madonna-vogue-video-30th-anniversary>
- Hobson, N. M., Risen, J., & Inzlicht, M. (2017). The psychology of rituals: An integrative review and process-based framework. *SSRN Electronic Journal*.
<https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2944235>
- Hokkaido University. (2018, June 26). *Relational mobility may influence your interpersonal behaviors*. Science Daily. Retrieved July 26, 2022, from www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2018/06/180626113406.htm
- Hurd, A. R., Anderson, D. M., & Mainieri, T. L. (2021). *Kraus' recreation and leisure in modern society* (12th ed.). Jones and Bartlett Learning.
- Iso-Ahola, S. E. (1979). Basic dimensions of definitions of leisure. *Journal of Leisure Research*, *11*(1), 28–39. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00222216.1979.11969373>
- Jeglic, E. L., Miranda, R., & Polanco-Roman, L. (2016). Positive psychology in the context of race and ethnicity. In *Positive psychology in racial and ethnic groups: Theory, research, and practice* (pp. 13–33). American Psychological Association.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/14799-002>
- Kelly, D., Steiner, A., Mason, H., & Teasdale, S. (2021). Men's sheds as an alternative healthcare route? A qualitative study of the impact of men's sheds on user's health improvement behaviours. *BMC Public Health*, *21*(1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-021-10585-3>
- Keyes, C. M., & Haidt, J. (Eds.). (2003). *Flourishing: Positive psychology and the life well-lived*. American Psychological Association. <https://doi.org/10.1037/10594-000>

- Law, T. (2020, April 1). *'It's like a lifeline.'* How religious leaders are helping people stay connected in a time of isolation [Article]. Time. <https://time.com/5813521/religion-coronavirus/>
- Lee, D. (2013, June 20). *The evolution of GLBT choruses*. Chorus America. <https://chorusamerica.org/singers/evolution-glb-choruses>
- Livingston, J. (1990). *Paris is burning* [Film]. Art Matters Inc.
- Maddux, J. E., & Kleiman, E. M. (2021). Self-efficacy: The power of believing you can. In C. R. Snyder & S. J. Lopez (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of positive psychology* (3rd ed., pp. 443–452). Oxford University Press.
- Moreland, R. L., & Zajonc, R. B. (1982). Exposure effects in person perception: Familiarity, similarity, and attraction. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 18*(5), 395–415. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0022-1031\(82\)90062-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/0022-1031(82)90062-2)
- Murray, R. (2017, March 31). *After an accident left her paralyzed, this woman started a wheelchair dance team*. TODAY. <https://www.today.com/health/meet-rollettes-wheelchair-dance-team-la-t109536>
- Morse, D. F., Sandhu, S., Mulligan, K., Tierney, S., Polley, M., Giurca, B. C., Slade, S., & Dias, S. (2022). Global developments in social prescribing. *BMJ Global Health*.
- Načinović Braje, I., Klindžić, M., & Galetić, L. (2019). The role of individual variable pay in a collectivistic culture society: An evaluation. *Economic Research-Ekonomska Istraživanja, 32*(1), 1352–1372. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1331677x.2018.1559073>
- Newman, D. B., Tay, L., & Diener, E. (2013). Leisure and subjective well-being: A model of psychological mechanisms as mediating factors. *Journal of Happiness Studies, 15*(3), 555–578. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-013-9435-x>

- Norlian, A. (2020, October 7). *With the rollettes experience, A paraplegic uses her wheelchair to keep dancing*. Forbes. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/allisonnorlian/2020/10/07/with-the-rollettes-experience-a-paraplegic-uses-her-wheelchair-to-keep-dancing/?sh=1dbc97ae6225>
- Norris, F. H., Stevens, S. P., Pfefferbaum, B., Wyche, K. F., & Pfefferbaum, R. L. (2007). Community resilience as a metaphor, theory, set of capacities, and strategy for disaster readiness. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 41*(1-2), 127–150.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10464-007-9156-6>
- November Project. (n.d.). <https://november-project.com/locations/>
- Oishi, S., & Westgate, E. C. (2021). A psychologically rich life: Beyond happiness and meaning. *Psychological Review*. <https://doi.org/10.1037/rev0000317>
- Pawelski, J. O. (2020). The elements model: Toward a new generation of positive psychology interventions. *The Journal of Positive Psychology, 15*(5), 675–679.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760.2020.1789710>
- Penedo, F. J., & Dahn, J. R. (2005). Exercise and well-being: A review of mental and physical health benefits associated with physical activity. *Current Opinion in Psychiatry, 18*(2), 189–193. <https://doi.org/10.1097/00001504-200503000-00013>
- Peterson, C. (2006). *A primer in positive psychology* (1st ed.). Oxford University Press Academic US.
- Petruny, M. (2017, December 22). *How this special olympian reached his dream of qualifying for Boston*. Runner's World. <https://www.runnersworld.com/news/a20864611/how-this-special-olympian-reached-his-dream-of-qualifying-for-boston/>
- Pieper, J. (1963). *Leisure: The basis of culture*. Pantheon Books.

- Prilleltensky, I. (2008). The role of power in wellness, oppression, and liberation: The promise of psychopolitical validity. *Journal of Community Psychology, 36*(2), 116–136.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/jcop.20225>
- Prilleltensky, I. (2021). *How people matter*. Cambridge University Press.
- Putnam, R. D. (2020). *Bowling Alone: The collapse and revival of American community*. Simon & Schuster.
- Roberts, K. (2006). *Leisure in contemporary society*. (2nd ed.). CABI.
- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Intrinsic and extrinsic motivations: Classic definitions and new directions. *Contemporary Educational Psychology, 25*(1), 54–67.
<https://doi.org/10.1006/ceps.1999.1020>
- Ryff, C. D., & Keyes, C. M. (1995). The structure of psychological well-being revisited. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 69*(4), 719–727. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.69.4.719>
- San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus. (n.d.). *Season 44 Member Handbook*.
- Santos, H. C., Varnum, M. W., & Grossmann, I. (2017). Global increases in individualism. *Psychological Science, 28*(9), 1228–1239. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797617700622>
- Schueller, S. M. (2014). Person–activity fit in positive psychological interventions. In A. C. Parks & S. M. Schueller (Eds.), *The Wiley Blackwell handbook of positive psychological interventions* (pp. 385–402). John Wiley & Sons.
- Seligman, M. E. (1990). *Learned optimism: How to change your mind and your life*. John Murray Press.
- Seligman, M. E. (2011). *Flourish: A visionary new understanding of happiness and well-being*. Atria Books.

- Seligman, M. P., Ernst, R. M., Gillham, J., Reivich, K., & Linkins, M. (2009). Positive education: Positive psychology and classroom interventions. *Oxford Review of Education*, 35(3), 293–311. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03054980902934563>
- Sherrieb, K., Norris, F. H., & Galea, S. (2010). Measuring capacities for community resilience. *Social Indicators Research*, 99(2), 227–247. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-010-9576-9>
- Sirgy, M., Uysal, M., & Kruger, S. (2016). Towards a benefits theory of leisure well-being. *Applied Research in Quality of Life*, 12(1), 205–228. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11482-016-9482-7>
- Slemp, G. R., Chin, T.-C., Kern, M. L., Siokou, C., Loton, D., Oades, L. G., Vella-Brodrick, D., & Waters, L. (2017). Positive education in Australia: Practice, measurement, and future directions. In *Social and emotional learning in australia and the asia-pacific* (pp. 101–122). Springer Singapore. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-3394-0_6
- Smith, E. E. (2017). *The power of meaning*. Crown Publishing Group Penguin Random House USA.
- Southwick, S. M., & Charney, D. S. (2012). *Resilience: The science of mastering life's challenges*. Cambridge University Press.
- Stebbins, R. A. (1992). *Amateurs, professionals, and serious leisure* (2nd ed.). ACP - McGill Queen's University Press.
- Tay, L., Pawelski, J. O., & Keith, M. G. (2017). The role of the arts and humanities in human flourishing: A conceptual model. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 13(3), 215–225. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760.2017.1279207>
- United States Census Bureau. (n.d.). *Calculating migration expectancy using ACS data*. Retrieved December 3, 2021, from

<https://www.census.gov/topics/population/migration/guidance/calculating-migration-expectancy.html>

Westgate, E. C., & Oishi, S. (2022). Art, music, and literature: Do the humanities make our lives richer, happier, and more meaningful? In L. Tay & J. O. Pawelski (Eds.), *Oxford handbook of the Positive Humanities*. Oxford University Press.

Wilson, N. J., & Cordier, R. (2013). A narrative review of men's sheds literature: Reducing social isolation and promoting men's health and well-being. *Health & Social Care in the Community*, 21(5), 451–463. <https://doi.org/10.1111/hsc.12019>