

# *In Sickness and In Health: Recreation for Mental Health*

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# *Leisure Recreation Pursuits*

- While leisure & free-time activities are familiar venues for human development and quality of life, how does “**place attachment**” contribute to human well-being and quality of life?
- Well-being for this discussion is framed on the premise that “**freedom of choice and action**” are critical to being able to achieve what a person values doing or being.



# *Leisure and Place Attachment*

- **Leisure experiences** are socially constructed within individual, family and society (Godbey, 2010);
- **Place attachment** is reflected in ways that we interact with our environment/ sense of place: direct – through our senses to indirect - cognitive processes (Tuan, 1977);
- **Sense of place** is that “meaning” that people place on significant environments (Williams, 2008).
- For example, thinking back to a “**time and place**” where you were playing sports and what early recollections do you remember, and how have they impacted your life?



# *Family and Relationship to Place*

- **Family characterized as a relationship** with place – how are the lives of individual family members, and bonds between family members organized around “place and/or place meanings”?
- People often **value their relationships to outdoor places** not merely because they were useful for pursuing recreation outcomes, but because these specific places conveyed a sense of individual identity and group affiliation and over time – **people accumulate meaning and form emotional ties to specific places** (Williams & Patterson, 2008)



# *Learning from Clients...*

- Importance place has on ERS and their influence on overall wellbeing (+/-)
- Influence of recreation activities (+/-)
- Person's attachment is primarily based on security, materials needs, physical and emotional health, and social relationships.
- Leisure often seen as a means for achieving goals at the individual and collective levels: **physical & mental**, economic survival, **human development**, well-being and **environmental quality**.



# *Summary*

- People benefit from a sense of involvement, belonging, and/or **identification with places** they use for their leisure pursuits;
- **There is a need for people to** establish and maintain some control over their relationships **to specific places that contribute to their sense of belonging and identity; and**
- Understanding ERs and how to best interpret them when analyzing **individual, family, and societal relationships to place** is critical to understanding client attachments.

