LEISURE AND THE SENIOR CITIZEN

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

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

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

Creative Activities

Clay modeling  Sculpturing  Ceramics  Jewelry  Plastics  Sewing  Decoupage  Mending  Quilting

Rug making  Toy making  Cooking  Music  Drama-charades  Pantomimes, puppetry, story telling

Outings  Camping  Bicycling  Deck tennis  Table games  Table tennis  Dancing—square and social

Knitting  Crocheting  Carving  Painting  Sketching  Textile painting  Singing  Reading to others  Caring for a bulletin board

Gardening (flower and vegetable)  Whittling  House plants  Hobby shows  Bazaars  Bird watching

Social Service Activities

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

Visiting—individual and points of interest  Adopt-a-pal  Sewing and mending for others  Making toys for children  Shopping  Grooming  Reading  Letter writing  Listening  Serving as a host  Community and church drives  Editing a newsletter

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

References


Williams, Arthur. Recreation In The Senior Years. 1962. Available from the National Recreation Association, New York City. $3.95.

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