

## THE IMPORTANCE OF A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE AND THE ROLE OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IN THIS PLAN

GHERMAN ALEXANDRU ANDREI<sup>1</sup>, MONEA DAN<sup>1</sup>, GOMBOS LEON<sup>1</sup>,  
PATRASCU ADRIAN<sup>1</sup>

**ABSTRACT. Introduction** The concept of free time has evolved over the centuries according to various socially organized models. Thus, it was found that mankind has always enjoyed a certain type of leisure organization, various forms and activities of organization. **Objective** The study aims to identify a concept of physical education for free time, stimulating the desire to exercise, developing the spirit of initiative, ensuring continuity in the practice of motor activities. **Methods** Major benefits of web-based questionnaires and surveys are that they do not require the administration of materials in person, are accessible world-wide, and are therefore available cross-culturally. **Results** A majority of the subjects (68.5%) view a healthy diet as “very important” for a sport point of view. If we were to couple this with the “important” answer to this question we would find that a vast majority (94.4%) view diet and nutrition as a key component of physical activity. **Conclusions** Leisure physical activity helps for a healthy lifestyle, regardless of the profession you practice. Through this paper we intend to create a guide in the practice of physical leisure activities and to help in their practice. Nevertheless, many different types of exercise have been shown to be beneficial, including aerobic training, resistance or strength training, walking, hopping, swimming, aquatic exercise, as well as exercises to improve flexibility and balance for a healthy lifestyle.

**Keywords:** *leisure physical activities, sports, time management, health.*

**REZUMAT. Importanța unui stil de viață sănătos și rolul activității fizice pe acest plan. Introducere** Conceptul de timp liber a evoluat de-a lungul secolelor în funcție de diferite modele organizate social. Astfel, s-a constatat că omenirea s-a bucurat întotdeauna de un anumit tip de organizare a timpului liber, de diferite forme și activități de organizare. **Obiectiv** Studiul își propune să identifice un concept de educație fizică pentru timpul liber, stimulând dorința de exercițiu, dezvoltând spiritul de inițiativă, asigurând continuitatea în practica

---

<sup>1</sup> University of Babeș Bolyai, Faculty of Physical Education and Sport, Cluj-Napoca, Romania  
\*Corresponding author: alexandru.gherman@ubbcluj.ro

activităților motorii. **Metode** Avantajele majore ale chestionarelor și sondajelor bazate pe web nu necesită administrarea personală a materialelor, sunt accesibile în întreaga lume și, prin urmare, sunt disponibile transcultural. **Rezultate** Majoritatea subiecților (68,5%) consideră o dietă sănătoasă drept „foarte importantă” din punct de vedere sportiv. Dacă ar fi să cuplăm acest lucru cu răspunsul „important” la această întrebare, am descoperi că o mare majoritate (94,4%) consideră dieta și nutriția ca o componentă cheie a activității fizice. **Concluzii** Activitatea fizică de agrement ajută la un stil de viață sănătos, indiferent de profesia pe care o practicați. Prin această lucrare intenționăm să creăm un ghid în practicarea activităților de agrement fizic și să ajutăm în practica lor. Cu toate acestea, multe tipuri diferite de exerciții s-au dovedit a fi benefice, inclusiv antrenament aerob, antrenament de rezistență sau forță, mers pe jos, sărituri, înot, exerciții acvatice, precum și exerciții pentru îmbunătățirea flexibilității și echilibrului pentru un stil de viață sănătos.

**Cuvinte cheie:** *activități fizice de timp liber, sport, managementul timpului, sănătate*

## Introduction

The contemporary world, faces multiple global problems - The COVID-19 pandemic, also known as the coronavirus pandemic, the imbalance of the ecological system, interethnic and religious conflicts, the crisis of jobs, destructive human vices, the crisis of identity, property, values, etc., and education, as an action for the betterment of the human being, is called to contribute to the formation-development of the personality in order to prepare for the solution of these problems. In this sense, the human becoming expected by education means not only the change of some internal, personal properties, but also the formation of skills of intelligent management of some given sources, such as, for example, time. At the same time, education, as a project of human becoming, but also as a real phenomenon, refers to the concept of time and temporality, as it involves a process and its succession in time, an extension even outside the normal pedagogical time, therefore the issue of rational use of time becomes a concern both for the designers of education and for each employee in the educational process. (Lucaci G., 2013)

Leisure education is a specialized form of the integral / basic educational process, which includes several fields (cultural-artistic, tourist, social, economic, etc.) and considers the training of students in the competence of leisure management. From the perspective of lifelong learning, it proves to be a cost-effective family, health, social and economic education, and its importance will

increase with the implementation in the Republic of Moldova of the concept of lifelong learning, which requires mastery by young people. the competence to manage the value of free time in favor of the development of a cultural personality and the promotion of an active citizenship. (Clichici V., 2018)

The concept of free time has evolved over the centuries according to various socially organized models. Thus, it was found that mankind has always enjoyed a certain type of leisure organization, various forms and activities of organization. Ancient civilizations based the well-being of their culture on the development of entertainment, during which time people practiced sports (competitive wrestling, gymnastics, Olympics, hunting); arts (music, dance, theater), forms of religious worship and other fields of general culture. But each civilization had a specific use of leisure, for example, in Egypt the temples were equipped with troops of animators; in Assyria and Babylon music and dance were predominant on feasts and royal assemblies. In Israel, the major contribution of the population was to observe the seventh day of the week called the "Sabbath" - a time for human rest and worship of the Divinity, being proclaimed at the level of the Law or Commandment, however, in Greece, the behaviors of ancient citizens were considered much more perfect models due to the interdependence of time and education. (Clichici V., 2018)

According to the 2011 census, the data collected shows that 46.8 million adults aged 20 and over currently live in the UK. A large proportion of these people do not meet the recommended requirements of physical activity, beneficial to health. These low levels of physical activity are of major interest because they demonstrate the importance of physical activity for overall health and for the prevention of chronic diseases that continue to increase. Physical inactivity is the fourth leading cause of global mortality and ill health in today's society. Heart disease, cancer and type 2 diabetes could be prevented or reduced if more people became active in sports. The costs of health and chronic illness could be reduced if more people became physically active, and physical inactivity cost the UK economy more than £ 5bn a year. This evidence of physical inactivity for adults aged 16 to 65 summarizes the benefits of taking part in physical activity, stimulating the UK adult population to physical activity. (Physical activity for adults. Evidence briefing. 2015)

In 2002, the World Health Organization adopted a recommendation that everyone should practice at least 30 minutes of daily physical activity. In its White Paper on Sport, the Commission noted that studies show that more daily physical activity is recommended. This suggests that promoting physical activity in the EU would be beneficial for different age groups, such as children and young people, adults and the elderly. These EU sport guidelines, by proposing more concrete action guidelines, are intended to address decision-making forums at all levels

(European, national, regional, local), both in the public and private sectors. The EU guidelines seek to define useful steps to help implement the proposed objectives, also following another strategic document adopted by the Commission. A strategy for Europe on health issues related to obesity, overweight and nutrition, adopted on 30 May 2007, "considers that Member States and the EU must take proactive measures to reverse the decline in physical activity levels in recent decades caused by many factors. "The EU does not limit the discussion on obesity, but supports a strong argument for taking action to increase physical activity and address current deficits. Organizational and structural factors that influence people's ability to be physically active must also be addressed through an Adequate coordination of nutrition, overweight and obesity policies on the importance of physical activity in the fight against obesity and related diseases was emphasized by both institutions (Anders LB, et.al. 2008).

The EU continues to support measures for the collection and dissemination of new methods of intervention and coordination at local and regional level for nutrition, health and physical activity. In many EU Member States, sports organizations tend to focus only on the organization of competitions for professional competitions. They should be encouraged to implement strategies for sport that take into account the promotion of grassroots sport and the impact of sport on public health, social values, gender equality and cultural development. (Anders L.B., et al. 2008)

Sports clubs through their versatility and profitability can help meet the needs of the population for daily physical activity. A challenge for the future is the organized sports sector, which needs to offer quality health-related exercise programs at the national level. Trainers and managers of sports organizations play an important role in promoting physical activity. Their professional experience guarantees the necessary expertise to help people in training and physical activity. Physical activity must be present in daily life and cannot be limited to time spent in the sports or leisure center, thus, access to adequate information on how to increase activity in daily life, at home, as well as and at work and when moving from home to other locations. Physical activities such as cycling or walking from home to the sports center increase the benefit for the person concerned, as well as for his environment. (Anders L.B., et al. 2008)

Physical activity outside of school can be greatly promoted by making school sports facilities available after school hours. Teachers should provide them with the necessary expertise to convey clear and precise messages to students and parents, to make them aware that physical activity is an essential requirement for health. Healthcare entrepreneurs need to be prepared to provide advice on physical activity in relation to people's specific conditions. Information on the need for physical activity, lifestyle changes should be

available to all health professionals during their studies, and continuing education in this growing field should be mandatory. In addition, it would be useful to recognize sports medicine as a specialty in the EU, an important part of sports medicine is prevention to promote physical activity that improves mood and human health. (Schulenkorf N., Siefken K., 2019)

Scientists, organized in a reference group could be useful, especially to test ideas and messages. Community involvement should be achieved through the use of the Internet, to raise awareness, to send materials to doctors, companies, schools, local press releases, to ask local community experts to write articles and involve local celebrities in promoting activities. physical leisure. Media professionals play a key role in making changes in public and individual attitudes. Given the relevance of the media, especially television but also of the Internet, in determining lifestyles, it becomes important for professionals active in this field to be aware of the problems of physical inactivity related to the impact on health and the possibilities that the media possesses them to influence people's behavior. (Anders L.B., et al. 2008)

### **Objective**

This work was possible with the financial support of the Operational Programme Human Capital 2014-2020, under the project number POCU 123793 with the title „ Researcher, future entrepreneur - New Generation“. The paper includes scientific data on: the development of the concepts of leisure and leisure education, the perspectives of approaching leisure education, the functions, principles and pedagogical conditions necessary for leisure education, analysis of theories and ideas.

The study aims to identify a concept of physical education for free time, stimulating the desire to exercise, developing the spirit of initiative, ensuring continuity in the practice of motor activities. This paper is intended to be a "tourist guide" on the complex map of factors that, in an interdisciplinary way, outline factual efficiency and which through practical "exploitation" can maximize the duration and quality of life. In a materialized eventuality, this theoretical guide can be continued through an orientative framework of practical activity, which is not a commitment, but a desire.

### **Methods**

The major benefits of internet-based questionnaires and surveys do not require personal administration of materials, are available worldwide, and are therefore cross-cultural. Thus, once the recruitment posts were sent, the

administration of the questionnaire and the registration of the answers was self-run on the socialization and email channels. Email addresses were made available to interested parties for any questions or feedback regarding the questionnaire. The final stage of data collection was the satisfaction of the answers for their participation.

Previous reports have indicated that one of the benefits of online questionnaire-based research is easy to collect data. An important aspect considering the number of responses we received, it is necessary to allocate time to complete the online questionnaires. If the response rate does not reflect data from other studies, or their number is not high enough then time-related problems may arise in collecting data and responses for each person interested in analyzing the results.

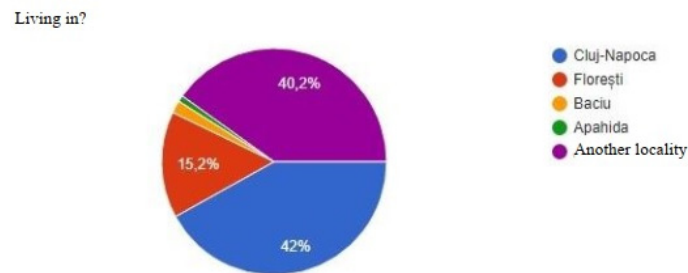
### Subjects

Gender and Age (Graphic No. X1 and No. X2) from the data that I collected from the beginning of the questionnaire, I can see that my sample consisted of more male than female participants. I can also say that the majority of participants were between ages 19 and 22. This is because these questionnaires were mainly handed out to students. The target group of the questionnaire was people who have at least finished high school working or studying in Cluj-Napoca. The total age gap was between ages of 15 and 50. This may help me think of a suitable dissemination of findings for a specific age group, based on the results of this questionnaire.

Once a questionnaire has been constructed and tested, the next step is to recruit respondents willing to complete the questionnaire. We located a series of discussion groups on the internet and social networks that were concerned with organizing physical activities in their free time. Recruitment was done by posting a message to the groups indicating the nature of the questionnaire and the link on the questionnaire. Before participating, there was the opportunity to ask questions by e-mail or on social networks where the link was disseminated. A dedicated e-mail address was created for the study, which was intended to reinforce the study, while providing a central contact address. This address has been monitored so that we are aware of any problems and their resolution.

Our study was meant as a pilot research into management of factors and how they influence QoL and *leisure-time physical activity*, and as such we worked on descriptive statistical data. Our parameters were unique and weren't correlated with the others. Through this pilot study we tried to observe a broad picture of the status quo in regards to QoL and sports. We displayed quantitative raw and percentile data of each parameter and interpreted in the context of known empiric data from day-to-day habits of students in Cluj-Napoca.

Most subjects were either from Cluj-Napoca itself (42%) or from another town (40.2%). The least amount of subjects was from small towns or villages around Cluj-Napoca (total of 11.8%). This suggests that our findings will be related to either Cluj-Napoca permanent residents or temporary ones.

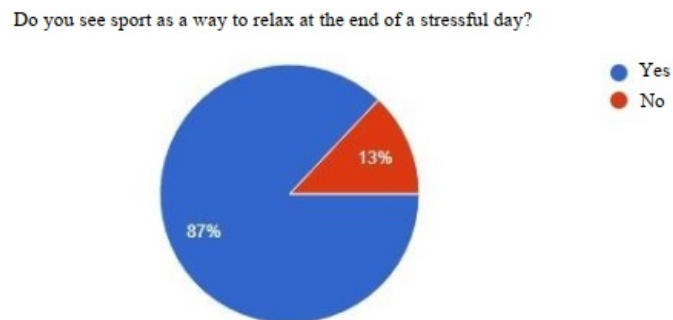


Graphic No. 1 Subjects Location

## Results and Discussion

### 2. Do you see sport as a way to relax at the end of a stressful day?

From Graph No. 2 we can clearly tell that using physical activity/sport as a way of relaxing after a stressful day is the most popular amongst our subject pool. Perhaps this is a de-stressing method that we can look deeper into in the future. We may also search for elements of emotional, affective and cognitive relaxing and recharging that may emerge from using sport as a distressing method.

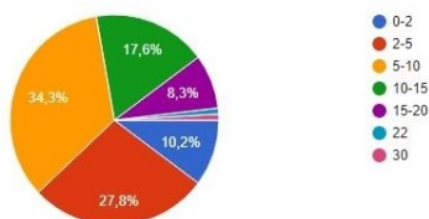


Graph No. 2 Do you see sport as a way to relax at the end of a stressful day?

### 3. How many hours of physical activity do you do per week?

Out of the subjects, 27.8% answered that they spend between 2-5 hours per week practicing sport (or a physical activity), while 34.3% answered that they do the same thing between 5-10 hours per week. The percentage difference between the two groups is relatively small (6.5%), which means that at any time the first group may outtake or rebalance the percentages. The majority of the subjects answered that they practice sport between 2 and 10 hours per week. Worrying is the fact that 10.2% of the subjects only spend less than 2 hours per week doing sport (Graphic No. 3).

How many hours of physical activity do you do per week?

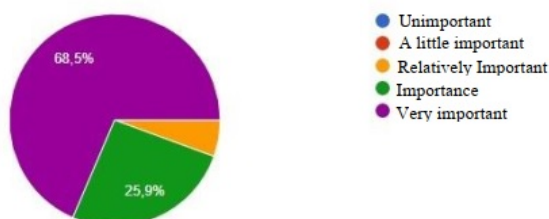


Graphic No. 3 How many hours of physical activity do you do per week?

### 4. How important is a healthy diet for a sports-active person?

A majority of the subjects (68.5%) view a healthy diet as “very important” for a sport point of view. If we were to couple this with the “important” answer to this question we would find that a vast majority (94.4%) view diet and nutrition as a key component of physical activity. This was surprising because of previous knowledge and trends. Moreover, the lack of a strong and organized sport culture and education in schools has led us to believe that not many people understand the link between diet/nutrition and sport (Graphic No. 4).

How important is a healthy diet for a sports-active person?



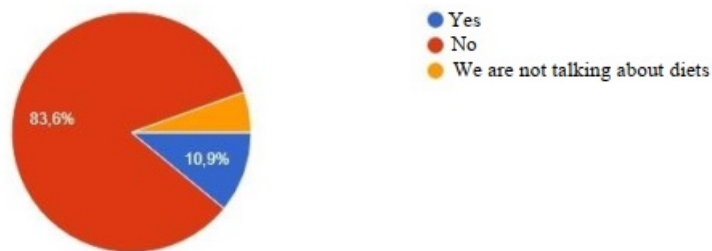
Graphic No. 4 How important is a healthy diet for a sports-active person?



5. Do you work with a coach to establish a diet to help you get in better physical condition?

On the other hand, Graph No. 5 displays that the majority of subjects (83.6%) don't get help from a specialist or trainer for calculating, setting or figuring out a diet that would allow them to achieve higher performance and better fitness. There were 5.5% of the responders that admitted they never discuss diet with their trainers. This is a bit worrying because this means that either the trainer doesn't know anything about diet (or how important it is) or the trainer doesn't care about the client and wants to have an easy work focused on routine elements of the workout. The rest (10.9%) answered that they do talk or request advice from the trainer about their diet.

Do you work with a coach to establish a diet to help you get in better physical condition?

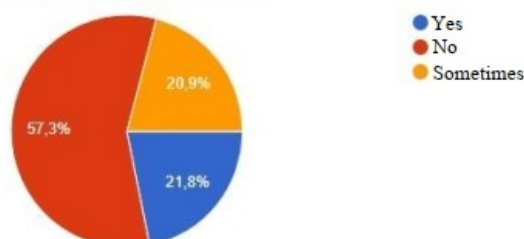


Graph No. 5 Do you work with a coach to establish a diet to help you get in better physical condition?

6. Do you take dietary supplements for athletes?

A small majority of the participants (57.3%) admitted they never use diet supplements aimed at athletes. This can go to show that these types of supplements are of no interest to most people. On the other hand, a fifth of the subjects said that they either use it frequently or sometimes. Together these 2 groups make up for 42.7% which is a very high number. This may be a problem if the use and administration of such supplements is done without a proper training and a strong knowledge of their effects. An incorrect use of supplements may be detrimental for the outcome of a workout or the results may not be the ones intended in the first place (Graph No. 6).

Do you take dietary supplements for athletes?

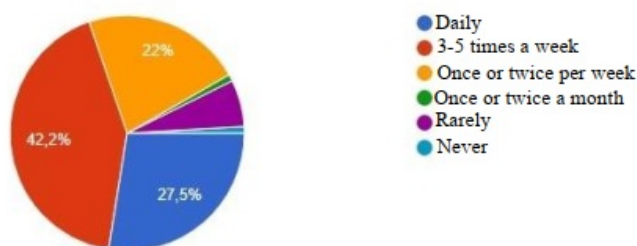


Graph No. 6 Do you take dietary supplements for athletes?

#### 7. How often do you participate in physical sports activities?

Out of all the participants, 27.5% of them said that they practice physical activities every day while 42.2% practice them 3-5 times per week. Added together, these two groups can signify the importance of sport activities and how regularly they are performed. A third of the participants said that they would practice sport activities less than 1 or 2 times per week. It seems as though physical activities are not yet viewed as important in day-to-day life, considering that a third don't include them in a more often manner in their daily routine (Graph No. 7).

How often do you participate in physical sports activities?



Graph No. 7 How often do you participate in physical sports activities?

#### 8. When was the last time you practiced exercise / sports?

At the time when the questionnaire was filled, 62% of the responses mentioned that the last time sport activities were done was in the time frame of 48 hours. ??Due to the length of the study this may be misleading because

some late completion of the questionnaire may have coincided with a prior day of sport activities. The answers to this questions indicate that a small percentage (9.4%) have last been involved in a sport activity more than a month prior to the study. This result is a positive one which may indicate that even though physical activities have a less frequent rate during the week, they are still undergone within the timeframe of a month (Graph No. 8).

When was the last time you practiced exercise / sports?



Graph No. 8 When was the last time you practiced exercise / sports?

9. To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding physical activity:

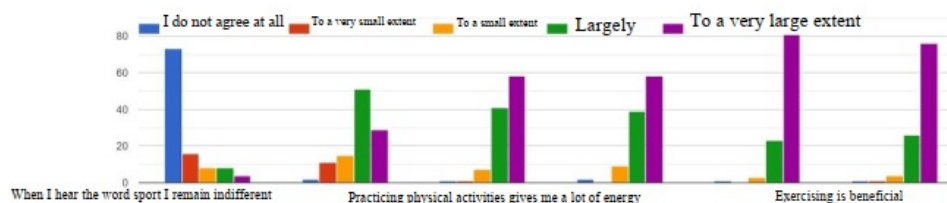
The answers in Graph No. 9 seemed to have corroborated with each other. All the answers were in favor of physical activity/sport in each item.

The first statement had an overwhelming percentage of responses saying they disagree with it. This means that our study group doesn't remain indifferent towards sport activities.

The statement regarding the competitiveness of sport has resulted in a majority of subjects affirming they do care for the most part. This indicates that even though this study focused on sport activities undergone in the subject's free time, competitiveness plays a major part in the subject's opinion.

The last four statements tried to find the participant's opinion regarding sport in: physical and mental health, daily energy and pleasure generation. All these statements received a majority of answers that were "strongly agree" or "agree". This means that the responders' attitude towards the use of sport activities for general wellbeing is important. Therefore, a more in-depth study should be conducted to identify the actual reasons and why the subjects think this. A strong understanding of these reasons may help future trainers and educators to construct a thorough methodology for improving the frequency of weekly physical activities.

To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding physical activity



Graph 9 To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding physical activity

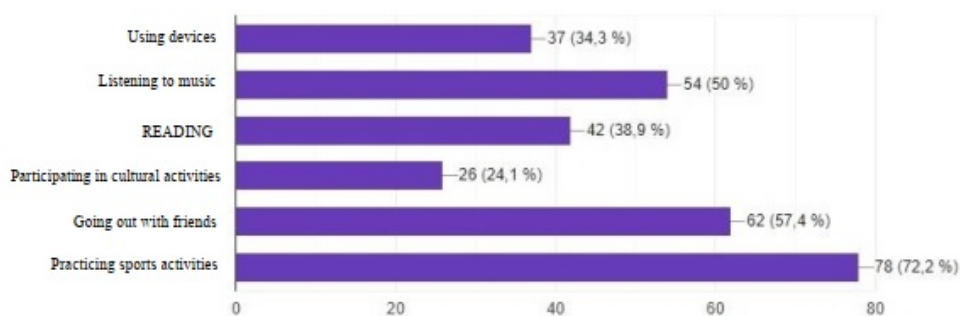
10. How do you spend your free time most of the time? (Please read the options and check all the situations that suit you).

This question Graph 10 aimed to identify what activities are the most common for the subjects to do in their free time. The answers may paint a picture of the activities that are currently in trend among our group of participants.

The results show that sport activities have been chosen by 72.2% of the participants. Moreover, social activities such as “hanging with friends” have also scored high (57.4%). Individual activities such as “reading” or “listening to music” situated at an average position, around half of the subjects admitted they would spend their free time doing these. Lastly, answers to items “using technology” or “attending cultural events” were the least chosen and not far apart from each other. These answers paint a structured priority list for our study group:

- On first place for preferred activities to do in their free time are: physical and social activities;
- On the second place are “alone activities” such as reading and listening to music;
- Lastly are cultural and technology-based activities.

How do you spend your free time most of the time?



Graph 10 How do you spend your free time most of the time?

## Conclusions

At the end of this study we can say that either participant, depending on his motivation and attitude, can manage his free time, in which the practice of a motor activity is an essential factor with a major impact on his physical, moral and mental development. Each participant benefits, in addition to the usual occupations (work, school, current obligations) from a certain period of time (leisure) that can be used in order to create a state of well-being - pleasure and relaxation. We cannot notice the same thing when we want to identify in the participants a leisure management, this concept being almost completely missing, and the motor activities being practiced somewhat spontaneously. One cause may be the mentality of everyone, because when analyzing free time, this notion does not only mean the interval outside the regular hours - work, school and other current obligations, but the period that remains available to meet a need, desire, hobbies or motor activities.

A majority of the subjects view a healthy diet as “very important” for a sport point of view. If we were to couple this with the “important” answer to this question we would find that a vast majority view diet and nutrition as a key component of physical activity, we can clearly tell that using physical activity/sport as a way of relaxing after a stressful day is the most popular amongst our subject pool.

Leisure physical activity helps for a healthy lifestyle, regardless of the profession you practice. Through this paper we intend to create a guide in the practice of physical leisure activities and to help in their practice. Nevertheless, many different types of exercise have been shown to be beneficial, including aerobic training, resistance or strength training, walking, hopping, swimming, aquatic exercise, as well as exercises to improve flexibility and balance.

## REFERENCES

- Anders L.B., Anderssen S., Bachl N., and colab., (2008) Orientările U.E. privind activitatea fizică. Bruxelles. Comisia Europeană, Web:  
<https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/sites/eacea-site/files/eu-physical-activity-guidelines-2008.pdf>
- Clichici V., (2018). Educație pentru timpul liber din perspectivă axiologică. Chișinău. Editura Lyceum. ISBN: 978-9975-3285-2-4, Web:  
[http://ise.md/uploads/files/1548322736\\_educaia-pentru-timpul-liber.pdf](http://ise.md/uploads/files/1548322736_educaia-pentru-timpul-liber.pdf)

- Lucaciu G. (2013). *Filosofia timpului sau Viața între model și stil*. Oradea. Editura Universității din Oradea. ISBN: 978-606-10-1037-0,  
Web:[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/294244906\\_Filozofia\\_timpului\\_i\\_sau\\_viata\\_intre\\_mod\\_si\\_stil](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/294244906_Filozofia_timpului_i_sau_viata_intre_mod_si_stil)
- Physical activity for adults. Evidence briefing. (2015) National Center for Sport and Exercise Medicine East Midlands., Web: <http://www.ncsem-em.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/adults-evidence-briefing.pdf>
- Popescu L., Abalășei B.A., (2018). Particularități privind managementul activităților motrice de timp liber(loisir). *Jurnalul Știința Culturii Fizice*. Nr. 30/1. Pg. 110-114. ISSN: 1857-4114, Web: [https://ibn.idsi.md/ro/vizualizare\\_articol/69024](https://ibn.idsi.md/ro/vizualizare_articol/69024)
- Schulenkorf N., Siefken K., (2019). Managing sport for development and healthy lifestyles: The sport for health model. *Journal: Sport Management Review*. Nr. 22. Pg.96-107, Web: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1441352318304157>