

WHEN LEISURE AND HEALTH MEET: A POSSIBLE THEORETICAL APPROACH FOR THE COMPOSITION OF EVERYDAY PRACTICES

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ABSTRACT: Everyday life, in addition to a set of activities developed and experienced throughout the day, is also a time filled with meanings and meanings. Included in this time are leisure and health, central elements for maintaining individual and collective life. Also included in different academic curricula, these major fields of knowledge are often presented and treated separately during the process of professional academic training. This text, the result of a post-doctoral residency in the Interdisciplinary Post-Graduate Program in Leisure Studies, is a joint composition between an occupational therapist and a Physical Education professional, in an attempt to bring knowledge centers closer together and present a new possibility approach to Leisure Studies.

KEYWORDS: Health. Leisure activities. Occupational therapy. Physical education and training.

QUANDO LAZER E SAÚDE SE ENCONTRAM: UMA APROXIMAÇÃO TEÓRICA POSSÍVEL PARA A COMPOSIÇÃO DE PRÁTICAS COTIDIANAS

RESUMO: A vida cotidiana, para além de um conjunto de atividades desenvolvidas e vivenciadas ao longo dos dias, é também um tempo recheado de sentidos e significados. Inseridos nesse tempo, estão o lazer e a saúde, elementos centrais para a manutenção da vida individual e coletiva. Inseridos também em diferentes currículos acadêmicos, estes grandes campos de conhecimento são, muitas vezes, apresentados e tratados de forma separada durante o processo de formação acadêmica profissional. Este texto, fruto de uma Residência pós-doutoral no Programa de Pós-Graduação Interdisciplinar em Estudos do Lazer, é uma composição conjunta entre um terapeuta ocupacional e um profissional de Educação Física, na tentativa de aproximar os núcleos de conhecimento

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e apresentar uma nova possibilidade de abordagem para os Estudo do Lazer.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Saúde. Atividades de lazer. Terapia ocupacional. Educação Física e treinamento.

Introduction

Everyday life, in addition to a set of activities developed and experienced throughout the day, is also a time filled with meanings and meanings. Each subject and collective living their daily lives constructs different contexts that gradually become part of their history. In this set of daily activities, often materialized by actions related specific to each culture, historical time, mode of production, desires and possibilities, some aspects that go unnoticed, although conceptualized separately in the academic context, have relationships that as being so related, are often not observed.

We are hereby specifically dealing with leisure and health, distinct knowledge centers representing important parts of each person's daily life. On one side, health treated from an unattainable perspective, such as full physical, mental and social well-being as pointed out by the World Health Organization (WHO), is practically an incessant, but lost, search, given that part of an outdated and unattainable concept. Leisure, in turn, even with the diversity of research, is still constantly perceived as a purpose, that is, it is always the final intention of those who experience it.

Certainly, if looking at these two cores of knowledge seems so consolidated on one perspective, on the other there is a need to establish new possibilities to (re)think practices, both leisure and health and, in addition, a possible relationship between this knowledge, in order to build possibilities for intersections between them.

This construction becomes necessary from two points: if health, thought of from a concept of full well-being, is something unattainable, as long as material conditions are not possibly available for this plenitude, how then can we think about health? If

leisure is an everyday experience, how can it not be the purpose of the experience in itself?

Reflecting on these issues offers a necessary relationship between the fields of leisure and health, a relationship that is constituted from more critical conceptions of reality, which enable both the convergent use of health, as a purpose of the daily practical life of an individual, and of leisure, as middle element of the production of human health, from a practical and practical perspective, productive for individuals who experience it but not in favor of (rest for) work; in favor of a production that encompasses culture, human activity and the production of different identities, inherent to life itself.

Thus, it is possible to understand leisure as a powerful element in the construction of health processes. Although this statement has a conclusive tone, it is (indeed) appropriate to present and develop the thinking and method that we built over 18 months (October 2020 to February 2022) of a partnership in a post-doctoral residency in the Interdisciplinary Postgraduate Program in Leisure Studies (PPGIEL) at Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais [Federal University of Minas Gerais] (UFMG), in an attempt to correlate the previously mentioned knowledge cores. We certainly do not intend to exhaust the theme throughout this text, but rather to introduce it. In this regard, the idea is to weave an approximation of different knowledge centers (occupational therapy, health, physical education and leisure) based on the construction of a method, for the use of leisure as a moderating element between bodily practices, daily occupations and health production. For the purposes of organizing thought and reading, we present below the methodological construction of the process and reflections on the actions, although it needs to be made clear to the reader that these stages occurred concomitantly during the time of postdoctoral residency.

Methodology

This paper is composed using the narrative method. This option was chosen due to the possibility of listening, in different ways, to stories and perceptions about everyday practical experience at different times. At first, it is important to inform the reader that these narratives will be provide in three different ways: the first, which we call chronicles, is composed of a reflection on everyday situations experienced/observed by one of the authors.

The second, in turn, presents results from guidance on the Final Paper (TCCs), supervised during the postdoctoral period. These Final Papers (TCCs) had two main characteristics: they dealt with the relationship between occupational therapy and leisure, based on a review of the literature on publications on the subject and based on field research carried out with women during embroidery production.

Finally, the third one is linked to the construction of a literary workshop during the Covid-19 pandemic period, in order to try to contribute to the EEFFTO community being able to give new meaning to issues related to their mental health. We confess, however, that this workshop was a wise mistake: by organizing the actions of the meetings, we systematically organized a method for using leisure as a powerful element in the construction of health processes. Below we present each moment mentioned with a brief reflection and, subsequently, a possible relationship between the construction of these elements and the use of leisure as a tool in the production of health.

Chronicles

Taking my own experience (Alessandro) as a starting point, each chronicle written was my perception of elements permeating my daily life and my experiences, more or less like a field diary. This point is especially interesting, assuming that it

establishes some questionings: is an auto-ethnographic work less important/valid than a more traditional ethnography? Methodologically, what is the implication of the researcher being the main narrator of the event (not as an ethnographer, but as an actor, or both)? Does the narrative lose its details to the extent that the place of speech belongs to the researcher or is it the opposite? In the positivist idea of doing science, does the visceral approach between researcher and object make that same object less possible to be researched?

Indeed, this set of questions does not reflect the entirety of what it meant to put me in the central place of researcher and researchee, but they help to start thinking about the possibility of other methods and other ways of producing knowledge (not least because, fortunately, positivism is not the only way to do science). We will come back to this thinking later. Systematically, by looking at different everyday scenarios, I began to notice nuances that were initially hidden from myself, such as colors, possibilities and feelings.

In each written text, the possibility of understanding the context in partnership with the environment became more present; recognizing successes, failures, the relationship between health and illness, for example, was an arduous exercise in focusing the attention, so accustomed and trained to be objective in perceiving reality. As a materialist in the process of formation, it is clear that one must understand these contextual nuances as, perhaps, one of the most material imperceptible elements that everyday life presents: the colors of a city (in contrast to itself), daily life with 2 children in the process of isolation during the most critical periods of the pandemic; the need to adapt to the new context and work process, without contact with people who did me harm/good.

On the other hand, the environment also began to be better observed and cared. I remember that at some point (even though I didn't write about it), I reorganized the apartment's living room so that there was more space for playing with my eldest son: in that spot, Lego pieces took on different shapes, from traditional ones, when we use instructions, even spaceships, invented in partnerships; technological toys fought Viking battles; Hot Wheels traveled through cardboard boxes (so-called time machines), through dangerously narrow passages. The condominium, in turn, lacking life, was busier than ever: the party room, desolate by itself, became forests, tennis courts and football fields. The dark and lonely garage became a scene of monster chases, investigations and the classic hide and seek.

These experiences, with each chronicle produced, contributed to making everyday life a little more elaborate. Not to mention that the possibility of a certain lightness also allowed, in some way, to poeticize the method (which does not mean that the methodological rigor has decreased) and, in this regard, make it more human.

I cannot say that, initially, the intention of the texts was this encounter. No. The intention was a written portrait of what and how I saw some everyday situations. I confess, however, that at no point did I have the intention or desire to put myself out of my sight. On the contrary, I tried systematically to express every perception I had in the words of the chronicles. But that was it.

On the other hand, the meeting of the passionate look with the method allowed some insights into the method itself, and this was perhaps the most important gain in relation to the research process: at first, as previously mentioned, by positioning myself closer to the object of the research, that from the methodological rigor I was able to perceive nuances about the contexts described, such as some unseen beauties, possible paths in solving problems and a journey into my own interior.

Chronicles, as a narrative element, enabled greater familiarity with what was observed: by allowing me to experience each context in two different moments, the observed and the written, these two moments also became part of my story, allowing a constant appropriation of my praxis, of my daily activities. As a leisure activity, producing each text allowed me to travel within myself, building scenarios that moved between the concrete and the abstract of my thinking. In this regard, when writing the stories I experienced, I was also (re)writing my own story, reconstructing meanings and reviewing concepts, in a constant dialectical movement.

Leisure and Research

At the core of occupational therapy, leisure is taken as an area of occupation. In practice, this means that leisure is not understood as an activity performed solely, but rather composed of a set of historical and social meanings, both at the individual and collective levels, constituted by the history of each subject, in a unique way. It is taken as a dialectical process covering important transformations in and for the life of each subject who experiences it.

In addition, it is taken as a teleological experience, whose purpose is widely understood by the subject, precisely because it is inherent to their process of being and existing in the world. It is an intentional, planned activity, with an investment of time and energy that, in some way, allows the subjects who experience it to build their praxis. In this regard, leisure can serve both the current mode of production (in contemporary times, capitalism) and be a form of subversion of it. It can be the experience of a certain time of appropriation of what makes us human or alienating this process, insofar as it offers us finished experiences.

It should be noted, however, that the issue of leisure given does not place leisure itself in a good or bad condition. To exemplify this issue, let us take as an example the issue of production or consumption of manufactured goods: the fact that a subject or collective commits itself to the production of artisanal products and does not consume them purchased in commercial establishments, such as beers, knives and food, for example, does not mean that (1) the production of these manufactures is a leisure experience experienced by these subjects and (2) that this type of experience is better or worse than consuming these same products in an industrialized format.

Therefore, it is necessary to think that the perception of the experience of different leisure practices is something particular to one or more subjects, who have a link in this practice with their own history. Considering the previous example as starting point, it is possible to consider that, for certain subjects or collectives, consuming products that these same subjects produced, can be a way of approaching their praxis and, in addition, consuming industrialized products is something utilitarian in their lives, in other words, are nothing more than a matter of survival. On the other hand, for certain groups, the consumption of industrialized products can be considered a means of enjoying their leisure activities. An example of this reasoning are those people who are systematically in the same bar. In this case, the issue of beer consumption, for example, may not be central to the process, but rather the meeting itself.

During the period of post-doctoral residency, two research orientations completed as completion work for an undergraduate course in occupational therapy stood out in the field of leisure. The first, in the format of bibliographic research, based on an integrative review, focused on identifying how leisure appears in national occupational therapy journals. The second study, constituted as field research, sought to

understand, together with embroidering women from a family, the meanings and meanings of this craft.

Leisure in Occupational Therapy Publications

Methodologically, the bibliographic research was carried out in the occupational therapy journals: *Cadernos Brasileiros de Terapia Ocupacional/Brazilian Journal of Occupational Therapy*, *Revista de Terapia Ocupacional* of Universidade de São Paulo and *Revista Interinstitucional Brasileira de Terapia Ocupacional - REVISBRATO*, using the descriptor ‘Leisure’ and including all years of the journals, which provided a window between 1992 and 2020 (the year before the conclusion of the Final Paper - TCC). The inclusion criteria were all articles providing topic of leisure in occupational therapy. After applying the inclusion and exclusion criteria, 59 articles were identified in the journals. These findings were systematized into four different categories: leisure as an occupation; leisure as a form of fun; access and right to leisure and; leisure as a secondary element of the intervention process in occupational therapy.

Leisure as an occupation appeared in research findings linked mainly to the occupational performance of individuals, that is, they sought to describe whether and how subjects experience their leisure. It is important, in this context, to consider that for the core knowledge of occupational therapy, occupations are defined as “everyday activities that people do as individuals, in families and with communities to occupy time and bring meaning and purpose to life”³ (*World Federation of Occupational Therapists* - WFOT 2012 s/p). Breaking down this concept, the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA, 2014) highlights leisure as part of occupations, that is, as activities

³ Free translation.

that give meaning to life, promote a sense of competence, structure daily life and produce health.

In this regard, in the different contexts presented in the texts, it was possible to observe that the deficit in the area of leisure, whether of the subjects who suffer or of the caregivers of these subjects, is one of the determinants that compromises the relationship with one's own health. In this case we are, indeed, dealing with subjects with health conditions compromised by different pathologies, which does not mean, *a priori*, that subjects who do not experience health issues cannot develop illnesses due to the lack of leisure or, even, that they do not notice a decrease in their health levels for the same reason.

Another point to be considered lies in the issue of access to leisure for these subjects (and we are herein considering this difficulty in addition to architectural issues). A caregiver who is willing to be present for subjects who demand high levels of care may not be able, in turn, to manage their own leisure routine. Likewise, certain leisure activities (considering in this regard leisure activities in general may not be accessible due to financial difficulties. An example of this is a football fan who cannot go to the stadium to watch his team's game due to the price of tickets. Along these lines, the experience of leisure (or lack thereof) can be attributed responsibility for a process of suffering.

Leisure as a fun process appeared in the texts with the perspective of free time, as opposed to work. Enjoyment, in the publications researched, had an idle character, in the sense of doing something you like in your free time. Thus, activities such as cycling, visiting relatives, going to the cinema, playing outside, watching TV, practicing physical activities and sports, driving a car, preparing meals for friends, carrying out manual activities, reading newspapers, books or magazines, having hobbies, fishing,

playing a musical instrument, traveling, filling out forms or carrying out intellectual activities were the research findings.

When thinking about leisure from the perspective of fun, we assess an important risk: by placing occupation in a process of opposition to the world of work, in a contradictory way, leisure is placed in favor of work itself. Thinking of the moment of fun exclusively as an artifice for resting from work is, automatically, placing it in a process of restoration for the work itself, that is, the person who has fun does so to recover his strength and give account of his/her journey. An example of this is the traditional daily organization of the working day, which provides two out of seven days of rest for workers.

Not to mention that entertainment is directly linked to certain socio-historical contexts. Within this context, it is possible to consider that there are certain limits to the experience of entertainment, limits that can be identified from visible barriers, such as the difficulty of accessing parks, squares and buildings, for example, or invisible barriers, such as in the case of ‘flashmob-style gatherings’ (*rolezinhos*) in shopping malls, squares and parks, present in the media in 2014, or the beer phenomenon in large cities in Brazil.

Therefore, when thinking about fun from a more contextual perspective, it is clear that in the case of architectural barriers, to use the example above, there is difficulty in access materialized in the lack of structure such as ramps and access to equipment, concrete difficulties in relation to power enter, stay in and leave places, both public and private. On the other hand, the unseen barriers still attribute a judgment of values that has been cruelly perpetuated for generations: in this case, what makes access for black and poor people unfeasible is the prejudice built around skin color and social condition. Regarding the brewer phenomenon, for example, the access condition is

measured from a financial and cultural perspective: financial given the prices charged by commercial establishments in relation to special and craft beers. The cultural issue, in this case, mainly refers to access to the labels of different beers: in a doctoral thesis, Tomasi (2018) concludes that the public who produces their own beer and who drinks craft and specialty beers is made up of individuals who: or those who have already had the opportunity to travel internationally and, in this way, try different types and styles of beer or those who have a financial life with some margin for these new experiments, even if they have not had the experience of an international trip.

Although these issues are mostly linked to a historical process of the construction of fun, it is impossible not to consider that, even in this situation, fun works in favor of capital, that is, to maintain a certain *status quo* that systematically builds an alienating structure. In this case, by favoring scenarios in which subjects are compelled to remain linked to certain structures, archaic, outdated values are also maintained.

Finally, within the scope of bibliographical research, leisure appeared in the literature from the perspective of access. In this regard, the texts found mainly addressed the relationship between leisure and the process of social inclusion, production of autonomy and as an intervention tool to guarantee subjects and collectives the experience of their leisure processes.

At this point, it is worth returning to the discussion already raised previously about the barriers and facilitators for leisure practices. Since leisure is approached from the perspective of human occupation and, therefore, a phenomenon, it is impossible to ignore that leisure will always be closely connected with the different individuals and contexts that surround it. In this case, it should also be noted that the historiography of

leisure is essential for guaranteeing (or not) rights, given that individual and collective histories are constantly permeated by processes of social inclusion or exclusion.

Therefore, it is worth questioning whether, in fact, leisure is for everyone and, furthermore, what leisure activities are for each individual/collective. The answer to this question is certainly not simple and we do not intend to exhaust it. It should be noted, however, if leisure is of individual/collective perception (e.g. playing football or watching series) and to these subjects the activities that make up this category are denied or made difficult for whatever reason, then leisure is, without a shadow of a doubt, a denied right to these subjects. Likewise, if we treat leisure as a closed concept, based on a set of ideas and predefinitions, by not being able to experience a leisure activity due to lack of free time, for example, we will also have the denial of the right to leisure.

However, if leisure is not something predefined and is considered an occupational phenomenon, the situation can become complicated, as any activity can be considered as leisure. Let us explain: taking a certain territory in which there are no playgrounds or squares for children (assuming here that playgrounds or squares are in fact leisure spaces), are children in the territory really denied access to leisure? Are streets, houses, streams not leisure spaces? Would a game of tag, football with flip-flops, hide-and-seek in trees (or in the rooms of houses) be less leisure than a seesaw and swing or a circle game? Is the right to leisure denied to the population of this territory simply because there are no playgrounds or squares?

If the answer to the previous questions is ‘no’, then the issue of the right to leisure is treated incorrectly in the publications, since the right to leisure itself is not denied, but violated by the lack of leisure spaces (assuming, again, that playgrounds and squares are spaces for this purpose). Therefore, a new question arises: who is denied the

right to leisure? Would it be the child who does not have access to squares and parks because they are not present in the territory or the children who have their childhood taken away by the need to increase their family income, or even workers who need to sell their labor during the weekends, doing odd jobs to help support the family and (contradictorily) away from it, without the necessary rest and time for individual and collective construction?

Perhaps, given these findings, the main reflection should be what is the role of leisure in guaranteeing rights? Should leisure, in this case, be a means or an end for different individuals and groups? These questions, although we consider them to be extremely relevant in terms of thinking and rethinking the relationships between leisure and health, are more of a provocation in the sense of a necessary exercise for professionals who work in the field of leisure.

The second paper built during the post-doctoral residency refers to the relationship between a leisure practice carried out by women in a family and the possibilities of these practices with women's mental health, in times of pandemic. Methodologically, it was characterized as field research, whereby the students who created the Final Paper (TCC) followed-up three women from the same family during their experience of crafts, specifically embroidery. Thus, interviews were carried out with the participants, from which three categories of analysis emerged: making crafts, in which historical aspects involved in the practices were identified; intrinsic aspects for the experience of craft practices and; crafts as leisure to overcome the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic.

In relation to craftsmanship, three central issues were observed: in the first, directly related to the historical aspect of the practice, it was found that the construction of craftsmanship was already directly linked to the experience process of the study

participants. The second point is directly related to the meaning attributed to the product of the practice, that is, the constructed object itself. The third point is directly connected to the environment and context in which the practice takes place.

With regard to intrinsic aspects for the production of crafts, the findings point directly to the individual taste in carrying out these practices, the context in which the experiences are inserted, whether considering the family cultural element or stage of life (retirement) and external recognition in relation to the work carried out.

In the last category, the notes of the participants converged to point out that the experience of their leisure activities was an important tool in the process of confronting the Covid-19 pandemic, as it contributed to the construction of strategies to overcome the countless difficulties experienced by each one of them. From the possibility of getting involved in an activity that sometimes took the focus away from different anxieties to the possibility of spending time with family members.

Reflecting on leisure practices based on historical, contextual and family issues is unique for thinking about the relationship between leisure and health. We consider that, even if the motivations for leisure practices were, eventually, extrinsic, this motivation was transformed into an internal desire. Furthermore, by recognizing themselves in the final product of their work, it is possible to attribute a practical character to these practices, that is, to the same extent that they produce an item, they also construct themselves as subjects.

The context also played an important role in the experience of craft practices, including when considering the pandemic. The family experience, permeated not only by the construction of products, but by the possibility of coexistence, appeared as an important possibility with regard to the production of coping with the different adversities of everyday life.

Leisure and Extension: The workshop ‘You have to laugh to keep from crying’

University extension, jointly to education and research, compose the three pillars of the public university. Extension, in particular, is an initiative that has the community, both internal and external to the Institution, as a central element. In the specific case of the workshop ‘You have to laugh to keep from crying’ [*Tô rindo pra não chorar*], a small rescue is in order, in order to contextualize the reader.

Right at the beginning of 2020, as is widely known, we began to experience what turned out to be an extensive period of the Covid-19 pandemic. At that time, establishments in different industries of the economy were closed, including Universities. Over time, despite being in a state of social isolation, important reports of suffering on the part of the university community appeared, precisely because of the isolation process.

The project 'You have to laugh to keep from crying' arose from an action that took place at the beginning of the pandemic, in mid-2020, of a literary workshop called *Letras do Claustro*, experienced by a group of students and coordinated by professor Alessandro Tomasi, from the Department of Occupational Therapy at UFMG. Letras had the isolation process and written production as its main elements and the idea was that it would be possible to write and express questions about the isolation process, fears and anxieties, in order to try to minimize these issues and reduce the distance imposed by the infamous virus.

When Letras ended and academic activities returned in a remote format, one of the students involved in the workshop sought guidance for the production of a TCC, with an idea based mainly on the empirical perception that, at EEEFTO, different manifestations of processes of suffering were systematically appearing. Thus, as part of

the Final Paper (TCC), the creation of the Workshop 'You have to laugh to keep from crying' was proposed, based on an extension project, which aimed to produce material prepared collectively and which could contribute to the participants in building possibilities for overcoming for the processes of suffering.

As the time experienced was still that of separation, due to the pandemic and the suspension of in-person activities at UFMG, the proposal was that the meetings would take place remotely via the Microsoft Teams platform and with a biweekly frequency and lasting approximately two hours. In structural terms, each meeting had a set of steps to be completed, always connected to both the Workshop's proposal and the demands brought by the participants. Thus, a specific methodology was established for the development of activities, following the steps described below.

Structurally, each meeting began with a presentation and discussion about the previous activity, as well as the reflections that the process brought. These discussions were extremely important for the process, as it was from each dialogue that the workshop plan was maintained or changed, according to the needs presented to the group. This format allowed for constant movement in the Workshop's coordination, since the theoretical motto was dialectical historical materialism.

The second stage of each meeting was the establishment of a trigger element for the day's discussions, always considering what was presented in the first stage. In this second stage, the triggering elements were audiovisual materials (memes, photographs, clippings of images from series/film/video, music, texts and objects held by the participants), which were watched/read/presented in the collective and, later, discussed the perceptions of each participant. Through these resources, a proposal was made to construct written narratives, in order to bring each subject closer to their memories and

processes already experienced, opening the opportunity to address elements that generated daily suffering for each person.

This second moment had the main objective of causing some provocation in the group, in addition to being a moment of preparation for the third stage, the proposal of the written text (which would be presented at the next meeting). For the last stage, the written narrative itself, text modalities were proposed: note, letter, poem, chronicles, jokes, stand up, musical parodies and free genre texts, which sought to build resources to confront the different sufferings addressed throughout meetings and, in this way, contribute to overcoming these difficulties, always through the use of humor, an equally central element in each moment.

All productions by each individual were shared with the collective of participants, if there was explicit authorization, via Google Classroom, administered by the Workshop coordinators. Participants who did not authorize the exhibition of the material continued to participate normally in the Workshop.

At the end of the extension activities, what stood out to us, in addition to the positive feedback narrated by each participant who completed the work, was the fact that the use of a leisure practice (not necessarily writing, but a moment of meeting and dialogue), ended up transcending practice and itself and ended up becoming what we can call a method.

In terms of power of transformation, the use of a well-structured process for each meeting, which was initially designed exclusively with the aim of organizing the thinking and procedures for writing a Final Paper (TCC), proved to be extremely effective with regard to the use of a leisure practice as a means and not an end. Let us explain: as a rule, as explained previously, leisure is approached in academic productions as a purpose, that is, the subject experiences leisure practices or not, has or

does not have access to these practices. Usually, these leisure practices (whether meetings, craft productions or writing processes) are the final purpose to be achieved.

Unlike this perception, at the end of the Workshop, it was possible to notice that the practice of leisure was present in a situation that we will call here a means: leisure was a means for each individual, and also the collective, to develop movements and strategies to overcome situations imposed by the pandemic period.

Relationships between Leisure, Health and Method

As an occupational therapist and physical education professional who works in the field of leisure, we are compelled to believe that this area of life makes up a primordial part of the existence of each subject and community, in its most different expressions. And, more than that, when this slice is missing for some reason, there is a significant chance of a certain impact on the health process.

We understand the concept of health, obviously, beyond biological, allopathic, mechanistic perception: based on the teachings of Georges Canguilhem (CAPONI, 1997), we understand that health is a movement, a *continuum* produced by subjects and communities in order to overcome the set of adversities that make up everyday living. In this regard, it is possible to state with some tranquility, bringing this thought to the knowledge centers of Physical Education and Occupational Therapy, that leisure is both a bodily experience, thinking in the first case, and an occupation, in the second. In short, it is an action experienced by the subjects, filled with meanings, meanings, historical nexus, daily constructions and deconstructions, permeated by time (desirable and available), culture and the mode of production in which it is inserted.

We understand that leisure, in addition to an everyday experience, is a moment in which individuals can, in some way, appropriate their desires, experiences, their

praxis, in short, their existence. In this regard, understanding leisure experiences from different perspectives, as understood by each subject, experienced and experienced in the most different contexts, is something that has systematically provoked us to reflect.

Among the questions we face throughout our academic lives, we highlight the following: how to think or rethink leisure not only as a purpose, but as a mediator between the production of health, the construction of praxis and the appropriation of oneself? How can we advance the discussion of leisure and its relationship with other fields of knowledge, in order to build interrelations between different types of knowledge? What is the meaning of the time invested in these leisure activities?

Methodologically, narratives, as a process of objectifying life stories, appeared in different formats and approached the object (leisure) in different ways. Beyond a methodological option, however, it is possible to see that the narratives were a methodological construction. Let us explain: in addition to listening or looking for what each subject or material could deliver, each narrative was building, in their respective places, the possibility of thinking and rethinking leisure and health itself as elements (not inseparable, but) partners in the everyday constructions.

It is possible to observe, however, that the intersection between these cores does not occur spontaneously: on the one hand, there is a need to establish a method that seeks the encounter between knowledge, which calls into question the linearity of scientific positivism without, on the other hand, losing the rigor of the method itself. The challenge lies precisely in the exercise of appropriating different ways of observing these objects and using different methodologies that allow the researcher to appropriate not only the object, but himself. Research would then become a tool for self-construction, as an observer and as observed, author and participant in each stage of the

study. Possibly, this was the most important finding we obtained during the time of this study.

Therefore, looking at the relationship between leisure and health, today seems logical to us: when experiencing leisure, individuals almost automatically increase their health levels. It is necessary to consider, then, that each leisure experience is not an end in itself, but a means that can be used by professionals who work with human activities in their most varied presentations, in the construction of interventions that benefit all actors involved in it, not only as an object of learning, but also as a tool for appropriating self-awareness.

However, thinking of leisure as a mediation of the subject-health relationship cannot be frivolous. At first, it is necessary to consider the representation of leisure for each subject, taking into account the environments (material) and contexts (immaterial) in which this subject is inserted, is the first task of each person who chooses to use this relationship as an intervention process, regardless of the area in which it is located. The exercise consists, mainly, in considering that leisure is not necessarily an end, but rather one of the possibilities in the construction of possibilities to overcome the difficulties of practical life. In addition, it is necessary to understand each story and each experience as unique because, only from these stories and experiences, can the possibilities of building coping with life's adversities occur.

This environment/context relationship is clear in the different approaches to leisure presented in this text: if leisure in publications had a purposeful character, that is, characterized essentially as an end in itself (experiences or does not experience the practice, has or does not have access leisure, etc.), in field research it was a means used for other purposes. We do not want to point out, in this case, that one job or use of leisure is better or worse than the other, but rather to provoke reflection that it is

possible, from a more critical perspective of reality, to appropriate leisure as a more dynamic element and that allows different appropriations, whether at the individual or collective level, as was seen in the use of chronicles, field research and in the workshop.

Finally, treating leisure (or leisure actions) using a certain method proved to be extremely efficient in the process of reframing everyday difficulties. By using crafts in a structured way, it was possible to assign each subject a leading role in their life process, constantly being provoked to review their thoughts and rethink their practices.

Final Considerations

The knowledge centers of occupational therapy and physical education, considered during this text, have the centrality of their practice in everyday life and in the body in movement. Leisure, as one of the points of congruence of this knowledge, is one of the central elements of the professional practice of these centers, being considered primarily as a purpose for both professions. Health, although it is the desire of the vast majority of people, from a biomedical perspective in capitalist society is often used as a means (mainly for the accumulation of capital) and ends up going unnoticed as the purpose of the process of being and existing in the world.

When going through these different types of knowledge, based on the narrative methodology, it was possible to reflect on two questions: the first refers to how leisure is approached within the scope of occupational therapy, and it is evident that although there is a concern with the professional object (human occupation), leisure occupies a place at the end of the process. On the other hand, empirically the perception is that leisure is used, to a large extent, as a means that points to a new object: health. In this regard, the exercise is to establish new roles for each core of knowledge, placing health as the final element of the process and leisure as a means to achieve it.

By this reasoning, when leisure is a purpose, it would then have an end in itself, that is, it meets a certain set of theoretical assumptions that can limit its relationship with health. In turn, thinking about leisure and health from a broader and more critical perspective, that is, from a perspective that establishes a connection with human praxis, the history of subjects and collectives, environments and contexts and the capacity to establish processes of change, expands the range of possibilities for reading leisure as an instrument of transformation, mediating the relationship between subjects and their health, precisely by creating/constructing possibilities so that each subject begins to move, in some way, towards overcoming their daily difficulties.

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