

In Response to Dattilo, Kleiber, & William's "Self-Determination and Enjoyment Enhancement: A Psychologically-Based Service Delivery Model for Therapeutic Recreation"

Linda L. Caldwell

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My task is to offer comment on the Dattilo, Kleiber, and Williams (1998) model of practice for therapeutic recreation (TR) from a research perspective. In offering these comments, I'll focus on the areas of self-determination and enjoyment, as these seem to be the central and most important components of their model. Finally, I'll add a few comments about the enjoyment—functional improvement link.

Dattilo and his colleagues (1998) have presented what promises to be a significant contribution to TR service and research. Their model implicates a number of important concepts which are already useful in TR. Practice models are important mechanisms for explaining fundamental processes. From a research perspective, however, their necessary simplicity often belies the myriad interactions and conceptual complexities in-

Linda Caldwell is an associate professor in the School of Hotel, Restaurant, and Recreation Management, 201 Mateer Building, The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA 16802. E-mail address is llc7@psu.edu. The author greatly appreciates the comments of Ralph Smith and the series editors for their valuable comments on an earlier draft of this paper.

herent in the model. As researchers and practitioners, it is a good exercise to re-examine commonly used concepts to avoid taking their meanings for granted. Concepts, such as "leisure lifestyle" and "self-determination," become a "TR language." This language is very useful for efficient communication, but this efficiency sometimes masks important complexities. To add to the problem, researchers operating from a positivistic paradigm often operationalize concepts using indices or scales. Of course these scales or indices can capture only part of the meaning of the concept. In the course of our research dialog, perhaps because of our limited ability to capture reality through research, our view of the concept becomes narrowed as we think about the concepts through the lens of our research.

I have a second general comment with respect to practice models. As with any model, we must make sure that we do not adopt it as a simple recipe for success and apply it liberally to all people. As Henderson (1996) pointed out in a different context, "one size doesn't fit all," and this statement is true for the Dattilo et al. model as well. Context, type of disability, and developmental stage are important considerations when applying any model. That is, for example, the need or desire for control differs across the lifespan.

Conceptual/Theoretical Issues

My primary focus is on the concepts of self-determination and enjoyment which are important to the Dattilo et al. model. Self-determination is a complex concept to understand, especially in reference to the various TR contexts. Enjoyment, however, is even more challenging and the literature (philosophical, psychological including sport psychology and social psychological) has reached little consensus on the meaning of enjoyment. What I offer here raises some of the questions or issues that might be addressed in the adoption of this model from a research perspective.

Self-Determination/Control

Dattilo et al. (1998) present the idea of self-determination as a central construct in their model. It is one that is used liberally in TR, as well as in leisure studies more broadly, and its importance in understanding leisure has been established both theoretically and empirically. The notion of self-determination here covers both behavior (actions taken) and cognition (beliefs about some event, judgments). Self-determination falls under the larger rubric of "control" which includes terms such as self-directness, choice, mastery, agency, autonomy, self-efficacy, and self-determination (Rodin, 1990). Dattilo et al. define self-determination as "acting as the primary causal agent in one's life" (p. 260). Hence, I am going to use the term control since it seems commensurate with the entirety of meaning used in the Dattilo et al. model.

The process of how control operates is important to consider. Terms such as perceived, actual, primary, and secondary have been used in the literature to describe control. Dattilo et al. (1998) discuss the notion of illusion of control, which is similar to Rodin's (1990) perceived control. Rodin juxtaposes perceived control with actual control. In this case, perceived control and the illusion of control exist when there are external guidelines or conditions imposed on the individual (e.g., in an institutional setting or at work), but the individual still feels, or is provided with, the opportunity to make some decisions or choices. While these two types of control are useful from a TR perspective, this conceptualization is problematic in that actual control is often impossible, no matter what "population" is considered. It is unlikely that any of us has complete control over our environment. What seems to be a more promising and theoretically viable conceptualization, and has been linked to the coping literature (e.g., Rosenberg, 1990), is to think about primary and secondary control (Weisz, 1990). Primary control allows one

to act, or at least attempt to act, on the environment to make a desired change. Secondary control occurs when objective conditions are not conducive to primary control. In this case, an individual controls his or her own perceptions of the situation such that any negative effect of the uncontrollable situation is minimized. Dattilo et al. imply secondary control by citing Deci's (1980) definition of self-determination which involves ". . . [the] ability to choose options and to adjust to situations when only one option is available" (p. 260). Both primary and secondary control work toward the same end: a satisfactory, if not enjoyable, outcome.

Given the complexity of the control construct, I suggest we take care when using the Dattilo et al. model to use an expanded conceptualization in which various forms of control that have been identified in the literature are used (see Table 1; Rodin, 1990; Weisz, 1990). This expansion provides a more flexible and realistic vehicle for understanding how control (self-determination) facilitates health and well-being among diverse populations. Furthermore, this typology helps us to more clearly and carefully explicate control so that operationalization of variables in a research study would be facilitated.

As indicated in Table 1, control is multifaceted. TR researchers would be well-served to try to understand each type of control and examine its usefulness in various TR settings. Table 1 suggests a number of interesting research questions that would be pertinent in a TR setting. For example, do developmental or health outcomes differ by type of control? Are certain types of control more appropriate vis-à-vis a leisure experience? More specifically, one could ask whether primary or secondary control is more effective in assisting individuals with a spinal cord injury to increase interpretive control over their leisure environments. Or, one could compare whether predictive or vicarious control was more powerful in in-

creasing the ability to overcome constraints to leisure among the elderly.

Control reconsidered from a developmental perspective is important to consider. Adopting this perspective would be helpful in identifying some of the moderating influences (interactions) likely to exist. Both Weisz (1990) and Rosenberg (1990) present evidence that the ability and awareness to use primary or secondary types of control differ with age, although each offers a slightly different perspective of why this might be so. One type of control might be more advantageous than the other, depending on both situation and age (Weisz). For example, physically avoiding a doctor's visit as a young child is not a likely possibility (primary control) but reinterpreting the situation or imagining pleasant experiences while getting a shot (secondary coping) is more likely. The important point for the purpose of this critique is that if we don't consider a developmental perspective in these models, we run a great risk of rendering these models useless, practically as well as theoretically. As another example from a broader leisure study, we found that parental control actually increased the quality of the leisure experience of eighth graders (Caldwell & Darling, 1997). Although this finding was contrary to prediction, we interpreted it to mean that the amount of acceptable control from external sources depends on where one is developmentally.

Another useful conceptualization on control is offered by Foner (1990). Foner suggests that there are two aspects of assessing one's potential for control: contingency expectations and competence beliefs. That is, how much control does one think is possible given the situation (unexpected snowstorm, cancer, doing well on an exam) relative to one's perceived level of skill. Of course, competence does not apply in noncontingent situations, but most people seem to be bad judges of their (and other's) ability to control situations in both contingent and noncontingent situations (Foner). Moreover, judging contingent situations and one's level of com-

Table 1.
Types of Primary and Secondary Control

| Type of Control | Process | Description |
|------------------------|----------------|---|
| Predictive | Primary | Attempts to accurately predict events and conditions so as to select strategies that are most likely to make objective conditions fit the self's needs, wishes, goals, etc. |
| | Secondary | Attempts to accurately predict events and conditions so as to control their impact on the self (e.g., to avoid uncertainty, anxiety, or future disappointment). |
| Illusory | Primary | Attempt to influence or capitalize on chance, so as to increase the likelihood that fate will fit one's needs, wishes, goals, etc. (e.g., riding a lucky streak). |
| | Secondary | Attempts to associate or "get into synchrony" with chance, so as to enhance comfort with and acceptance of one's fate. |
| Vicarious | Primary | Attempts to emulate the behavior, values, etc. of powerful individuals, groups, or institutions, so as to influence objective conditions as they do. |
| | Secondary | Attempts to associate or closely align oneself with other individuals, groups, or institutions, so as to share psychologically in the control they exert. |
| Interpretive | Primary | Attempts to understand or construe objective conditions so as to master them (e.g., figuring out the nature of a problem in order to solve it). |
| | Secondary | Attempts to understand or construe objective conditions so as to derive a sense of meaning or "purpose" from them, and thus enhance one's satisfaction with them. |
| Selective Attention | Primary | Attempts to focus attention on elements of a problem, so as to solve it. |
| | Secondary | Attempts to focus attention away from a problem area, so as to avoid or minimize the unpleasant thoughts and feelings associated with it. |

Source: Weisz, J. R. (1990). *Development of control-related beliefs, goals, and styles in childhood and adolescence: A clinical perspective*. In J. Rodin, C. Schooler, & K. W. Schaie (Eds.) *Self-directedness: Cause and effects throughout the life course* (p. 125), Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

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petence follows a developmental trajectory, where ability to assess accurately the likelihood of one's ability to control either contingent or noncontingent events increases with age. Conversely, belief about one's ability seems to decrease with age, at least among individuals aged 6 through 25. Dattilo et al. discuss the use of debriefing as a method of increasing one's self-knowledge and in turn, self-determination. Debriefing would be a helpful tool in learning to assess one's abilities relative to both contingent and noncontingent situations.

A final consideration is that control is differentially desired and achieved. Dattilo et al. (1998) reflect current thought in our literature which suggests that control of one's situation is uniformly desirable. Certainly, facilitating an individual's ability to initiate action, demonstrate autonomy, and be in control are critical, especially to persons with disabilities or other conditions. But, we must consider developmental "stage," context, personality, type of illness, and the interactions among these in order to understand the efficacy and desirability of control. Rodin (1990), for example, suggests that there are possible psychological and physical costs associated with control. Feminist writings in the leisure literature also suggest that there might be gender differences in terms of the need and desire for control. Furthermore, control over one's environment and actions suggests independent functioning. Interdependence and cooperation might be a more comfortable way of operating for at least some, if not many, women, although there are times when learning self-determination and being in control are necessary steps in the rehabilitative process (e.g., women with eating disorders, women who are victims of spousal abuse, newly acquired spinal cord injury). We do not seem to have a complete understanding of these issues yet. Research that is sensitive to the complexities of control based on context, personality, gender, and age/stage is needed.

Enjoyment

As mentioned, the various literatures which address enjoyment suggest that this construct is almost as challenging to define and operationalize as is leisure. Questions arise as to whether enjoyment is an affect, attitude, pleasure, or intrinsic motivation (Kimiecik & Harris, 1996). The usefulness of this model theoretically and practically also depends on a good understanding of the enjoyment construct.

The Dattilo et al. (1998) model makes an important contribution in that it places emphasis on enjoyment, a construct that is often lost in discussions of TR, but their model is somewhat confusing conceptually. It seems clear from the literature that conditions of control and/or self-determination are likely to produce enjoyment. Moreover, enjoyment often has been thought to be synonymous with flow (see Kimiecik & Harris, 1996 for a good review). The Dattilo et al. model is confusing because it parses out selected elements/antecedents/outcomes of flow and includes them in the overall model to lead to enjoyment, which might also be considered flow (as Dattilo et al. state at the beginning of their paper). The relationship between flow and enjoyment needs to be more clearly defined than it is currently used in the model. There is also the question of directionality of relationships. For example, does enjoyment/flow produce intrinsic motivation, or is it a result of being intrinsically motivated? It appears that Deci and Ryan, and Czikszentmihalyi have differing views on this issue (Kimiecik & Harris, 1996). These are empirical research questions as well as a conceptual ones.

Conceptually and practically, what seems to be missing from the model is an emotionality component, which I believe is an essential part of TR services. As the model is proffered, it is rather antiseptic. They are in good company, though, as other models of enjoyment and happiness have been criticized for this very thing as well. For exam-

ple, in a review of two books on the topic Braybrooke (1989) pleads for the inclusion of "sensual pleasure" and psychological tone in the definitions of enjoyment. The reader can see why. In one of the books Braybrooke reviewed, enjoyment was defined as

. . . x enjoys an experience or activity ϕ at t if and only if there is a collection of concepts C such that: first, x ϕ 's at t ; second, x 's ϕ ing causes x at t (a) to believe that ϕ realizes the concepts in C ; (b) to desire, of ϕ , under C , that it occur for its own sake. (Warner, 1987, p. 129, as cited in Braybrooke, 1989, p. 627)

The work of Dattilo et al. is far from being this antiseptic, but their engineered enjoyment seems to lack personal expression, meaning, and *joie de vivre* at any deep level. I am sure they did not mean to exclude the emotional component, but it is important to make these contributions of TR explicit. Braybrooke's (1989) plea for the inclusion of "sensual pleasure" includes this statement which is compelling and appropriate for TR.

. . . of the accommodation for sensual pleasure—not just the lurid, sexy sort so often under threat from respectability, but also the whole range championed by Sidgwick, from moments of exaltation listening to Bach down to the humblest pleasures, the aroma of fresh bread or the crisp feel of clean sheets. (p. 630)

In summary, literature (e.g., sport psychology, psychology) supports the notion of enjoyment as flow and considers it an important outcome and treatment variable (e.g., Kimiecik & Harris, 1996; Wankel, 1993; Waterman, 1993). My concern is that in a quest to conceptually and operationally define enjoyment, it has been stripped of an important essence.

One final thought regarding enjoyment. The model contributed by Dattilo and colleagues implies that enjoyment is an important part of leisure and that along with functional improvement, is the outcome of TR services. Although I agree that enjoyment is an essential defining characteristic of TR and leisure, I think we need to be careful to clarify how enjoyment is part of leisure and TR. Enjoyment as an outcome is used in other health-promoting fields as well (e.g., Wankel, 1993; Waterman, 1993). Therefore, I am not sure that enjoyment (and functional improvement) alone distinguishes us from other "treatment modalities," assuming that that is a worthy objective.

Functionality

The link between enjoyment and functional improvement is troubling for a couple of reasons. First, a sound empirical and/or theoretical rationale is needed to suggest this link as viable. Second, the TR field has yet agreed that functional improvement is the endpoint or the goal of its services. If this box read "health and well-being" I would not have a problem. Using the term health and well-being would be more inclusive as well. As the scope of service for TR expands, we do not provide services just to people with disabilities. Also included are, for example, youth at risk, those who are homeless or otherwise disadvantaged, etc. Additionally, with shortened lengths of stay in many clinical settings, functional improvement as a result of TR may be unrealistic. From a research perspective, it will be important to establish that TR facilitated enjoyment, leisure experiences, self-determination, and intrinsic motivation do contribute to health and well-being. The processes by which this occurs are important, which means that we must pay attention to moderating and mediating variables, and not just explain these away.

Summary and Conclusions

Dattilo, Kleiber, and William's (1998) model provides the field with useful psycho-

logically-based concepts by which to guide TR practice and research. I encourage use of this model, as I think it captures a fundamental process in TR. As we take a closer look at the model and its adoption from a research perspective, there are a number of conceptual challenges which might be addressed theoretically and empirically, using both inductive and deductive approaches. I've advocated for an expanded psychological approach which would include attention to how various developmental issues might influence the model. Also, I've advocated for research to attend to and explicate moderating and mediating variables that might influence the model (e.g., age/stage, gender). Further to that point, we need to understand that there might be reciprocal pathways within the model. Although Dattilo et al. also discuss this possibility, these are not explicated.

One study, or even a group of studies, cannot answer the all questions which are suggested both in the Dattilo et al. (1998) model and this critique. In order to advance the model, multiple methods are needed to contend with issues such as meanings, contexts, interactions, populations, etc. Dattilo et al. have provided us with a great deal of food for thought and an excellent foundation on which to begin some important work.

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