

Importance of Hobbies Lesson Guide



*EHC - improving quality of life
through continuing education*



Introduction

Hobbies provide a fulfilling, productive use of our free time, and our core identities are often bound up in the interests we choose to pursue when we are not working, sleeping or spending time with loved ones. In this lesson participants will learn more about the importance of hobbies.

Target Audiences

- EHC leaders and members
- Adult audiences
- Young adult audiences

Objectives - Participants will gain knowledge about hobbies.

Suggestions for Teaching

- Review the lesson guide and handout.
- Make copies of the handout.

Lesson

Importance of Hobbies

Having a hobby that we enjoy brings us joy and enriches our lives. It gives us something fun to do during our leisure time and affords us the opportunity to learn new skills. We are very fortunate to have so many different options out there today. In fact, there are entire websites devoted to hobbies and interests.

The best way to cultivate a new hobby is to try something new. The world is full of wonderful, exciting activities that we can explore and adopt as our own. Of course, all of us are unique and, therefore, our interests and hobbies vary. But once we find a hobby that we truly enjoy and are passionate about, we become hooked. It becomes part of our lives and captivates us in a very personal way.

There are many reasons why all of us should have at least one hobby, but here are the main advantages:

It makes you more interesting. People who have hobbies have experiences and stories that they can share with others. They also have specialized knowledge that they can teach to anyone who also has an interest in the same topics as they do.

It helps to relieve stress by keeping you engaged in something you enjoy. Hobbies give you a way to take your mind off the stresses of everyday life. They let you relax and seek pleasure in activities that aren't associated with work, chores or other responsibilities.

Hobbies help you become more patient. In order to develop a new hobby, you have to learn how to do something that is brand new to you. The odds are there will be a learning curve, and you will need to be patient in order to build your skills.

Having a hobby can help your social life and create a bond with others. A hobby is something that you can frequently enjoy with other people. Whether you join a club, play in a league, or just gift others with the fruits of your labor, a hobby is a great way to meet and get closer to people who have the same interests as you do.

It increases your confidence and self-esteem. The odds are that if you really enjoy an activity, you are usually pretty good at it. Any activity that you can excel in is an opportunity for you to build your confidence and develop pride in your accomplishments.

Hobbies help reduce or eradicate boredom. They give you something to do when you find yourself with nothing to fill your time. They also give you an activity that you can look forward to and get excited about.

It helps you develop new skills. A hobby that you really dedicate your time to will lead you to build new skills. As you spend more time at your hobby you will become better and better at it.

It increases your knowledge. Along with building new skills, you will also gain new knowledge through the development of your hobby.

It enriches your life and gives you a different perspective on things. No matter what type of hobby you choose, you will definitely be exposed to new ideas. Hobbies help you grow in various ways, including exposing you to new opinions and to new ways to look at life.

It challenges you. When you pick a new hobby, you will be involved in activities that are novel and challenging. If you don't find your hobby challenging, then you also won't find it engaging, and it will be less enjoyable. That means you need to find a better hobby.

It helps prevent bad habits and wasting time. There is an old saying that "idle hands are the devil's workshop." If you have good hobbies to fill up your free time, then you will be less likely to spend that time on wasteful or negative activities.

How to Find a Hobby as an Adult

Trying to figure out what to do during your days off or your evenings could be some tough stuff. It can feel a little cheesy trying to find a hobby as an adult, especially when one doesn't include drinking or happy hours. When you don't know what to choose, all the options seem kind of lame: Knitting is for old ladies, sports have never been your thing, and if you pick up something like biking or gaming, you'll feel like a little kid. But having a hobby doesn't just have to be a time filler you do in between friend hang-outs and work. It can morph into a passion that gets you excited, helps you recover from a long day, or gets your mind working. It helps you boost the quality of your life, and that's why they're so important to have.

But what if you're not particularly passionate about anything? Where do you start? Well, first of all, everyone has a passion — you just haven't discovered yours yet, probably. But don't worry, there are a lot of easy (and painless) ways to find out just what it is. Below are seven tips on how to discover what you love to do and find your hobby as an adult. Get ready to feel fulfilled.

Take it Back to Your Childhood

If you don't know where to begin, think back to what you loved doing as a kid. Those were the times you were wild and free, and you didn't do something unless you really, really loved it. Chances are, you still have a lot of those same core interests.

Crafting blogger Sarah White at Lifehack suggested, "Are there things you enjoyed as a kid that you might still enjoy as an adult? Maybe you had an awesome record collection, loved to sew clothes for your dolls or were always out on your bike. Those are all things you could pick up again as an adult that would make great hobbies." This doesn't mean you're about to go play hopscotch or creep everyone out in the sand box. Instead, use it as a springboard to discover what you loved doing. If it was tree climbing, maybe you can try wall climbing. If it was running through the backwoods of your house, try hiking. It's a starting point.

Try a Couple of Ideas on for Size

If you're stumped where to begin, throw yourself into options and see how you respond to them. Sometimes doing something as easy as walking around a crafts or sports store can get you thinking. Blogger White recommended, "If something from your past doesn't immediately jump out at you, it might be useful to hit the crafts store, the sporting goods store or the nearest music emporium or book store. Browse around and see what captures your attention. Maybe you find yourself drawn to the cookbooks or the scrapbooking section; this can give you a clue as to what you might be interested in."

Sometimes you have to physically see an option to get yourself curious about it, so go do some recon work in the store aisles.

Choose something that will make you forget about your day

If you're not into the idea of picking up a hobby just to occupy your downtime, try to think of something that makes you forget about the stresses and worries of your day. It should be something that helps you unwind and slip back into balance. If crocheting or learning a language feels like it would be work, then that's not the hobby for you. When you find something that gives you a sense of me-time and answers to your personality and interests, you'll find something that's more than just an activity: It'll help enhance your life.

See If You Have Any Past Hobbies That You Forgot About

Maybe you already had a hobby, just you completely forgot about it. Though it seems like a weird thing to do, sometimes our hobbies might feel like projects and we don't realize they could become a running activity in our lives. If you think back to a few projects you started in the past but then swiftly forgot about, you might have your hobby.

Notice What you Love to Buy As Guilty Pleasures

Is there a certain thing you just can't help but buy every time you're out shopping? The item might be holding the clue towards your next hobby. According to craft blogger Deborah at Creativity For Life, "Always checking out the latest fashion trends? Consider trying knitting or sewing. Do you love scented candles? Maybe you could make your own. Are your walls adorned with fine art? Try

painting.”

Are you always thumbing through short story books? Try writing your own. Are you always looking out for a chunky infinity scarf? Why don't you just make one? Your receipts might just hold the answers you're looking for.

See What You Want To Change About Yourself

Some people might have a hard time doing idle work that serves no purpose other than being fun. You know that feeling: When you're out at the movies or enjoying a long shopping trip, and you think “I really should be doing X instead.” If you're always on the move and trying to hit a goal or better yourself, make your hobby fit that criteria. Pick one up that will help you change for the better.

Mark Manson, self-improvement blogger suggested asking yourself this in-your-face question, “What is true about you today that would make your 8-year-old self-cry?” Meaning, what have you stopped doing just because it stopped being lucrative or adult responsibilities got in the way. Then, go after it. Chances are it'll give you a new sense of purpose.

Think Of the Last Thing That Made You Forget to Eat

What was the last thing you did in your life that made the time completely fly by? When did you have one of those moments where you checked the clock and were shocked you missed lunch or dinner because you were so absorbed in your work? Remember it, and then go after it, or pick apart the core ideas of what made it so special for you and see if you can find them in a different activity.

Manson explained, “It wasn't until I gave up the games that I realized my passion wasn't for the games themselves (although I do love them). My passion is for improvement, being good at something and then trying to get better...Maybe for you, it's something else. Maybe it's organizing things efficiently, or getting lost in a fantasy world, or teaching somebody something, or solving technical problems. Whatever it is, don't just look at the activities that keep you up all night, but look at the cognitive principles behind those activities that enthrall you. Because they can easily be applied elsewhere.” Look behind the reason why you love a certain interest, and see if you can apply it into a hobby. It's a lot easier than it first seemed!

Finding something that makes you tick outside of work can seem like a giant task in and of itself, but it's worth it to find something that makes you feel creatively and independently fulfilled, so try a few of these tips and see what happens. It may be easier to figure out than you expect.

Five hobbies that can improve your health

Dancing: A fun form of exercise

Dancing has a whole range of health benefits and it is an easy and accessible way to exercise for most people. Think about it: you don't need a lot of equipment to dance – just your feet, some tunes, and preferably a friend or two.

Dancing is gentle on the body – you can push yourself as hard as you want or settle into a comfortable groove that is just right for you. And anyone can dance!

Even if you are shy of cutting loose on the dancefloor, pretty much everyone enjoys moving their body to music, even if it is just within the comfort of their own home; there is no right or wrong way

to dance. Just do whatever feels good to you!

Dancing is a social activity, and we know that keeping active socially is important for general well-being. Most importantly, dancing is fun. This is a pain-free, energizing workout. But how, specifically, does dancing keep us healthy?

Firstly, dancing is an excellent cardio workout, and we know that cardio workouts help to improve cardiovascular health, increase stamina, and strengthen bones and muscles.

A 2011 Cochrane Review that examined 94 studies involving 9,917 participants also found that dancing at least three times per week seemed to improve balance in the elderly. This is important because the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) report that every year 2.8 million older people are treated in emergency departments for fall injuries.

Rates of unintentional fall deaths among adults are also becoming more common. The CDC say that between 2005 and 2014, unintentional fall death rates rose from 43,000 per 100,000 people to 58,000 per 100,000 people.

So, if an activity as simple as dancing could help to avoid some of these unintentional falls, then why not boogie away?

Gardening is good for the brain

Gardening may not initially seem like exercise, but studies have reported that a wealth of unexpected health benefits are associated with keeping your garden in order.

Firstly, the simple actions of pulling weeds, planting, and reaching for tools all contribute to a subtle form of aerobic exercise, which we know helps work muscles and boosts strength, stamina, and flexibility.

Also, being outdoors is just good for you. A 2014 study published in the journal of the Public Library of Science found that gardening and regular cycling reduce the likelihood of vitamin D deficiency in elderly people.

Both gardening and DIY were also linked with a reduction in the risk of heart attack and stroke of up to 30 percent in a 2013 study, conducted by the Karolinska Institutet in Stockholm, Sweden.

Writing: A wonder for wound healing

Surely sitting at a desk with a laptop or pen and paper cannot be good for your health? Prepare to be shocked.

Writing has been linked to a number of mental and physical health benefits, including improvements in memory, stress levels, and sleep, among other things.

Several studies, for instance, have found that writing about their experiences helps cancer patients to come to terms with their illnesses, helping the patients to withstand stress and potentially contribute to improved physical outcomes.

Overall, writing is a great tool for self-expression, and while journaling about trauma can be cathartic, there are also possible social benefits in writing for a public audience. Blogging, for instance, can help people to forge new relationships and build communities around their interests.

Music is medicine

Playing and listening to music can also benefit both mental and physical health. In 2013, Medical News Today reported on the first large-scale review of research papers studying music's influence on neurochemistry.

The review suggested that music can boost the body's immune system, lower levels of stress and anxiety, and ease depression.

Among patients awaiting surgery, listening to music was found to be more effective at decreasing anxiety than prescription drugs, and listening to and playing music was linked to lower levels of the "stress hormone" cortisol.

To get some idea of how much music excites our brains, a 2011 study also compared the brain's response to music with its reactions to food and sex, as the pleasurable feelings derived from all three are driven by release of the neurotransmitter dopamine.

Pets: Good for the heart

Pets of all types can make wonderful companions, and they can help us to be healthier in many ways.

According to the CDC, owning a pet may not only provides opportunities for exercise, outdoor activities and socialization, it can also help decrease your:

- Blood pressure
- Cholesterol levels
- Triglyceride levels
- Feelings of loneliness.

If you are wondering how this translates into wider health benefits, it is worth bearing in mind that all of these factors can help to minimize the risk of having a heart attack.

However, a 2013 study questioned whether the association between pet ownership itself is directly linked to the lowered risk of heart disease among pet owners that had been reported in previous studies.

"Pet ownership, particularly dog ownership, is probably associated with a decreased risk of heart disease," said study author Glenn N. Levine. "It may be simply that healthier people are the ones that have pets, not that having a pet actually leads to or causes reductions in cardiovascular risk."

If you have a regular hobby that you enjoy, why not spend some time thinking about how you might be able to apply your hobby-related activities to improving your health?

And if you are thinking of taking up a new hobby, then we hope this leader training guide has given you some ideas on how to be healthier while having fun!

References

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