

Leisure Attitudes and Self-Efficacy: Psychological Resources for Successful Retirement



The following quizzes (adapted from two different research studiesⁱ) can help you evaluate your attitudes toward—and self-efficacy for—leisure. By leisure, we mean enjoyable free-time activities. Your attitudes toward leisure are formed by your thoughts and feelings about leisure and how you actually invest your time and other resources like finances (e.g., do you see it as a waste of time or core to expressing yourself?). Leisure self-efficacy refers to your confidence in your abilities to take action on activities that are important to you. Both these have been demonstrated to be important psychological resources that help people feel more prepared and confident to manage the transition to retirement.

Leisure Attitude Scale

There are three components of our attitudes toward leisure: A cognitive component (what we think about leisure more generally), an affective component (how we feel or what we believe about leisure for ourselves), and a behavioural component (what we do as it relates to leisure).

On a scale from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree:

Cognitive component

- _____ Engaging in leisure activities is a wise use of time.
- _____ Leisure activities are beneficial to individuals and society.
- _____ Leisure activities contribute to one's health.
- _____ Leisure activities increase one's happiness.
- _____ Leisure activities help to renew one's energy.
- _____ Leisure activities help individuals to relax.

Subtotal: _____ (divide total by 6 to get average out of 5)

If you scored 2.5 or lower: this means you generally believe leisure is unimportant and has limited value in your own or others lives. *If you scored 3 and above:* this means you believe leisure is a worthwhile 'investment' of time and other resources. I see an abundant leisure-filled life in your future!

Affective component

- _____ My leisure activities give me pleasure.
- _____ I feel that leisure is good for me.



- _____ I like to take my time while I am engaged in leisure activities.
- _____ My leisure activities are refreshing.
- _____ I feel that the time I spend on leisure is not wasted.
- _____ I like my leisure activities.

Subtotal: _____ (divide total by 6 to get average out of 5)

If you scored 2.5 or lower: this means you generally dislike your leisure or experience limited pleasure from it. *If you scored 3 and above:* this means you like to enjoy your time (and other resources) spent on leisure and you regularly experience the health or well-being benefits that come from it.

Behavioural component

- _____ I do/plan to spend considerable time and effort to be more competent in my leisure activities.
- _____ I do/would plan to attend a seminar or a class to be able to do leisure activities better.
- _____ I support the idea of increasing my free time to engage in leisure activities.
- _____ I engage in leisure activities even when I am busy.
- _____ I do/would plan to spend time in education and preparation for leisure activities.
- _____ I give my leisure high priority among other activities.

Subtotal: _____ (divide total by 6 to get average out of 5)

If you scored 2.5 or lower: this means you don't want to waste your time on leisure or developing your skills and knowledge. *If you scored 3 or above:* this means you prioritize time for leisure and is important to you to have the skills and knowledge to be able to be successful in leisure.

Hint: If you rated 'low' in the cognitive or affective components you are encouraged to spend time thinking about the 'benefits' to you and others (even within your community) that come from all different kinds of leisure activities. Even the most basic of activities can have multiple benefits! If you scored 'low' on the behavioural component you are encouraged to incorporate brief moments of enjoyment (e.g., 5 minute vacations) into your day and then pay attention to the immediate benefits that come from this. Doing something for others can also be enjoyable and beneficial, so may make it seem a more 'worthwhile' investment of your time.



Leisure Self-Efficacy Scale

Use the following scale to rate your leisure self-efficacy. On a scale from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. As it relates to leisure:

- _____ I will be able to achieve most of the goals that I have set for myself.
- _____ I believe I can succeed at most any endeavor to which I set my mind.
- _____ I will be able to successfully overcome many challenges
- _____ I am confident that I can perform effectively on many different tasks.
- _____ Compared to other people, I can do most tasks very well.
- _____ Even when things are tough, I can perform quite well.
- _____ Total (Divide total by 6 to get average out of 5).

If you scored 2.5 or lower: You have a low sense of leisure self-efficacy. This means you have limited to no confidence in your abilities to take action on leisure-related goals that are important to you. *If you scored 3 or above:* this means you have a moderate to high sense of leisure self-efficacy. This means you see yourself as capable of accomplishing leisure-related goals.

Hint: If you rated yourself low, it's never too late to learn a new skill or language, or to explore new activities or leisure-based groups. If you're not sure what might be of interest we suggest you 'begin with the end in mind' and think about the benefits you want to experience from this new activity (e.g., perhaps it is to build stronger social connections or to feel more confident traveling). Once you've done this, set a small achievable goal for yourself to take a first step to building your skills, knowledge and confidence!

ⁱ Chen, G., Gully, S., & Eden, D. (2001). Validation of a new general self-efficacy scale. *Organizational Research Methods*, 4(1), 62–83.

Teixeira, A., & Freire, T. (2013). The leisure attitude scale: Psychometrics properties of a short version for adolescents and young adults. *Leisure/Loisir*, 37(1), 57–67.