

# Leisure needs of women of lived experience with homelessness

by  
Lexuan (Six) Deng



VANCOUVER ISLAND  
UNIVERSITY

**Leisure needs of women of lived experience with homelessness**

Lexuan (Six) Deng

Presented as part of the requirement for the award of Master of Arts in Sustainable Leisure Management within the Faculty of Management at Vancouver Island University

2020-12-11

## Thesis Examination Committee Signature Page

The undersigned certify that they have read and recommend to the Department of Recreation and Tourism Management for acceptance, the thesis titled “Leisure needs of women of lived experience with homelessness”, submitted by Lexuan (Six) Deng in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Sustainable Leisure Management.



---

Garrett Stone, Department of Recreation and Tourism Management, VIU

Supervisor



---

Jeff Rose, Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism, University of Utah

External Examiner

## Declarations

This thesis is a product of my own work and is not the result of anything done in collaboration.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Your Name

I agree that this thesis may be available for reference and photocopying at the discretion of Vancouver Island University.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Your Name

## **Abstract**

Women of lived experience with homelessness are among the most marginalized and stigmatized groups in Canada. They live an unstable and uncertain life. For example, women experiencing homelessness face economic poverty, housing stress, unique health issues, and high risk of abuse. Leisure can provide support during these negative life events; however, little is known about the leisure needs and preferences of this population. This study explores the leisure needs of women of lived experience with homelessness. The research questions of the study are (a) how do women of lived experience with homelessness define leisure? And (b) what are the leisure needs of women with lived experience with homelessness? The research is based on secondary data that originated from a project conducted by professors at Vancouver Island University and Nanaimo's Samaritan House staff. The original project utilized qualitative photo-based methods, photo-voice interviews and a photo-elicitation group, as well as a community-based participatory approach to analyze the faith-based and leisure needs of women experiencing homelessness. Findings from re-analysis of the original leisure-centric data indicate that leisure is defined as participation and access to diverse recreational activities and is seen as a luxury for women of lived experience with homelessness. In other words, leisure needs are addressed after basic necessities are satisfied. Inclusion in the community and humane treatment are central leisure needs. Leisure needs are also intertwined with other social-psychological and spiritual needs. This study provides numerous suggestions to related institutions and policymakers for addressing leisure needs among the population of women of lived experience with homelessness in the areas of resources, space, programming, staffing, etc.

## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the following people who gave me a hand in different roles throughout my thesis process.

Thank you to my supervisor professor Garrett Stone! I am grateful for joining with you on my academic path. We first met in the “Knowledge Creation & Mobilization” class you taught, which helped me systematically understand the methodology and writing skills for my thesis. Thank you for encouraging me on my first thesis topic in the class, and I appreciate your continuous encouragement both in class and during the thesis process. Moreover, thanks for involving me in the research project conducted by you and Sharon. I gained more understanding of the research analysis process and Canadian culture during the process. You always had great patience, to meet with me weekly and share precise and professional suggestions, which were a great support for my writing and life. I appreciate your efficiency and careful thinking in guiding my thesis and my personal development. I sincerely hope that you and your family have a wonderful life.

Thank you to my mentor professor Sharon Kelly. I always feel the sense of involvement and importance during the research analysis process with you and Garrett. Thanks for your patience in involving my ideas as I learned and grew.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Dr. Jeff Rose, my external examiner. Thank you, Dr. Rose for your time, and for your accurate and constructive critique.

Thank you, all professors in the 2018 Master of Sustainable Leisure Management program, the faculty members in the Department of Recreation and Tourism at Vancouver Island University. During class time, I learned and improved my academic language skills and learning about leisure and sustainability, as well as my knowledge of the community and culture of

Canada. I appreciate your efforts and conscientiousness on each class and assignment, which helped me establish a solid academic foundation for my thesis.

Besides, I would like to thank my parents, who gave birth to me and brought me up. Thanks for providing both financial and mental support for my life in Canada and for encouraging me to secure my every choice, including studying abroad in Canada.

Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to my friend, classmate and roommate Chiny Li. Thanks for your excellent care, especially when I felt sick, and your persistent mental support.

I am grateful for the pleasure of meeting all the people mentioned above, who helped me during the whole process of completing the master's program. Thank you!

## Table of Contents

<i>Declarations</i> .....	<i>i</i>
<i>Abstract</i> .....	<i>ii</i>
<i>Acknowledgements</i> .....	<i>iii</i>
<i>Table of Contents</i> .....	<i>v</i>
<i>Chapter One: Introduction</i> .....	<i>1</i>
<i>Chapter Two: Literature Review</i> .....	<i>6</i>
Homelessness in Canada .....	6
Leisure, Homelessness, and Health .....	13
Leisure, Needs, Motivations and Preferences.....	20
<i>Chapter Three: Methods</i> .....	<i>28</i>
Study Design.....	28
Researcher Position .....	29
Study Context .....	35
Population and Sampling .....	39
Data Collection .....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Methodologic Integrity .....	46
Ethics.....	48
<i>Chapter Four: Findings</i> .....	<i>50</i>
Definition of Leisure.....	50
Leisure Needs .....	52
Leisure as a Tool to Respond to Social-Psychological Needs.....	56
The Connection Between Leisure, Nature, and Wellbeing.....	58
Leisure Helped Women Satisfy Spiritual Needs .....	63

Constraints to Leisure Activities.....	64
The Role of Samaritan House and Related Organizations for Women of Lived Experience .....	68
<b>Chapter Five: Discussion .....</b>	<b>71</b>
Benefits of Leisure .....	71
Leisure, Stress, and Coping .....	71
Respect as a Central Need in Leisure and Life.....	72
Structural Constraints: Leisure, Time Poverty and Economic Poverty .....	76
Recommendations for Samaritan House and Other General Service Providers.....	80
Sustainability .....	88
<b>Research Limitations .....</b>	<b>89</b>
<b>Theoretical Implications and Future Research .....</b>	<b>91</b>
<b>Conclusion.....</b>	<b>92</b>
<b>References.....</b>	<b>94</b>
<b>Appendix A: Photo Voice Instrument.....</b>	<b>121</b>
<b>Appendix B: Photo Elicitation Instrument.....</b>	<b>123</b>
<b>Appendix C: Recruitment Poster.....</b>	<b>125</b>
<b>Appendix D: List of Counselling Service Providers* .....</b>	<b>127</b>

## **Chapter One: Introduction**

According to a 2016 State of Homelessness in Canada report, an estimated 35,000 Canadians experienced homelessness on a given night in 2016, and approximately 235,000 Canadians experienced homelessness at some point during that year (Gaetz et al., 2016). As one of the most vulnerable groups in society (Gloger et al., 2004), people who are homeless experience poor living and social conditions, resulting in severe physical and psychological health problems (Ballinger, 2002; John & Law, 2011; Lanius et al., 2010).

Women make up 27.3 percent of the overall population experiencing homelessness in Canada (Gaetz et al., 2016). Regardless of their housing status, women in Canada face structural disadvantages throughout their life including economic stress, housing stress and increased risk of violence (Pavao et al., 2007; Wenzel et al., 2004). Consequently, they are at higher risk of experiencing homelessness than men (McLeod & Walsh, 2014). Women of lived experience with homelessness also tend to be economically and materially poorer than their male, or housed female, counterparts (Sylvestre et al., 2018). Homelessness for these women can be attributed, in part, to the following: domestic violence (the main cause of homelessness for women), the instability of work, low wages and the higher possibility of being the head of a single-parent family, all of which affect their ability to acquire and maintain housing/ healthy living conditions or to be food secure (Rech, 2019). Many women experiencing homelessness also have negative life experiences, such as histories of physical or sexual abuse, parents who are drug addicts and physical or cognitive disabilities (Klitzing, 2004). Women of lived experience with homelessness experience higher risks of victimization and are more likely to be charged with so-called crimes of existence (e.g., jay walking, public intoxication) than other housed women living in similarly substandard circumstances (Kushel et al., 2003). In addition to being one of the most

marginalized and stigmatized groups in the society, they are also more likely to experience physical and mental illness, substance use and abuse, etc. (Rose, 2020). Thus, when compared with men who are homeless, women may deserve more attention from society both in theory and practice.

Every individual has a right to leisure regardless of their status (Rose, 2016). While leisure may not have a singular, direct effect on these chronic social ills, it is feasible that leisure may contribute to improvements in the quality of life for those experiencing homelessness (Trussell & Mair, 2010). A study of people who are homeless in Las Vegas, for instance, showed that while these individuals were materially poor, they still valued their free time and engaged in leisure activities for enjoyment or to distract from their personal problems (Patterson et al., 2013). Leisure is crucial for homeless people (Hodgetts & Stolte, 2016) to reduce stress, develop life skills (Tirone, 2004), address life's challenges (CCSD, 2001), improve physical and mental health and well-being, and provide coping mechanisms (Klitzing, 2003; 2004; Knestaut et al., 2010). The experiences and meanings generated by leisure activities are particularly salient for these individuals, who often lack opportunities to participate in meaningful activity due to various forms of discrimination and oppression, negative stigma, social exclusion, and accessibility issues (Fullagar 2008; Lloyd et al., 2007). Furthermore, for those who have been in shelters, the period after leaving these transitional spaces is an incredibly important time as it can mean the difference between becoming further disaffiliated and chronically homeless or integrating back into society with some semblance of stability. Leisure scholars suggest that programs such as fitness and skill-based recreation activities may help individuals experiencing homelessness to integrate into society and return to normalcy (Dawson & Harrington, 1996; Rose, 2016; Trussell & Mair, 2010). De Vries and Feenstra (2019) stated that therapeutic

recreation practice may assist women who are homeless in successfully navigating this transition as well. That said, people experiencing homelessness face a number of leisure constraints that make it difficult to satisfy their life and leisure needs (Johnson & Glover, 2013) such as lack of finances (Frisby & Millar, 2002; Reid & Golden, 2005), social exclusion (Schisler, 2019) and insufficient knowledge of leisure programs (Scott, 2013; Trussell & Mair, 2010).

Canada has adopted a 'housing first' approach to ending homelessness, that acknowledges that fulfilling basic needs (e.g., a secure shelter) is both an unconditional and often necessary precursor to the provision of other services and supports. However, in addition to having their basic living needs met, people who are homeless have recreational and social needs that ought to be met as well, to improve their overall stability, health and wellbeing (Rose, 2016). Different people have different leisure needs (Shin & You, 2013) and choose different leisure activities depending on their particular interests, physical environment, social context and personal characteristics (Tinsley et al., 1977). Many scholars have attempted to describe and categorize needs generally (think Maslow's hierarchy), and in conjunction with leisure specifically (Beard & Ragheb, 1980; Crandall, 1980; Driver et al., 1991; Iso-Ahola & Allen, 1982; Tinsley et al., 1977; Witt & Ellis, 1985). However, while the benefits of leisure for people experiencing homelessness are becoming clearer, few studies have adequately explored this populations' unique leisure needs. As a consequence, some institutions may approach this group with preconceptions regarding their leisure needs and assumptions regarding how to address those needs, without sufficient understanding of this populations' inner perspectives or exceptional circumstances (Brown, & Wyatt, 2010). Thus, a core feature of this thesis research is the application of a user-centered design thinking approach, which provided women

experiencing homelessness a real opportunity to voice their needs in a meaningful way (Docherty, 2017).

Attaching importance to women of lived experience with homelessness and empowering them to have a better quality of life are significant to facilitate the implementation of the sustainable development goals and targets, addressing goals including good health and wellbeing, gender equality, reduced inequalities and sustainable cities and communities (United Nations, 2015). This research aims to understand the real leisure needs of women of lived experience with homelessness and attempts to: understand their experiences, propose some related suggestions for community service providers, and promote well-being for this group (United Nations Statistical Commission, 2017). By being more responsive to their needs, some of the issues these women face could be addressed to help them to integrate into society, and contribute to their social, economic and political inclusion, as well as reduce inequality they encounter (United Nations Statistical Commission, 2017).

Ultimately, the purpose of this qualitative thesis research is to report on phase 1 (empathize) of a design thinking project, which used photo voice and photo elicitation methods to investigate the leisure needs and preferences of women of lived experience with homelessness residing in the City of Nanaimo, British Columbia (BC) Samaritan house (a transitional shelter for women). As an extension, the author explored the role of the transitional shelter staff (from the perspective of women experiencing homelessness) and how the research findings could better assist those staff and service providers as they seek to fulfill the leisure needs of the female homeless population in Nanaimo. This thesis is guided by the following research questions:

1. What does leisure mean to women of lived experience with homelessness residing in Samaritan house in Nanaimo?

2. What are the leisure needs of women with lived experience with homelessness residing in Samaritan house in Nanaimo?

## Chapter Two: Literature Review

### Homelessness in Canada

The Canadian Observatory on Homelessness (COH, 2012) defines homelessness as: The situation of an individual or family without stable, safe, permanent, appropriate housing, or the immediate prospect, means and ability to acquire it. It is the result of systemic or societal barriers, a lack of affordable and appropriate housing, the individual/household's financial, mental, cognitive, behavioral or physical challenges, and/or racism and discrimination. Most people do not choose to be homeless, and the experience is generally negative, unpleasant, stressful and distressing. (p. 1)

People experiencing homelessness are also classified as those who are under-housed or “at risk” of homelessness, with 50% of their income spent on housing and/or live-in accommodations that do not meet their basic needs (Gaetz et al., 2014). People in such situations often have low or inadequate incomes and they are in unstable intimate relationships (Gloger et al., 2004).

**Current number of homeless persons in Canada, BC, and Nanaimo.** As of 2016, the minimum number of Canadians who experienced homelessness on a given night was 35,000, and the number of Canadians who experienced homelessness at any given time during 2016 was 235,000 (Gaetz et al., 2016). According to Homelessness Services Association of BC (2018), the during 2017 and 2018, at least 7,655 people were experiencing homelessness in the province. This number was derived from using a single-contact census approach in 24 communities and indirect estimation data provided by experts in shelters and other social service agencies, which were not contained in the community-level homeless counts. In this statistical process, a Point-in-Time count during the 24-hour period was utilized, which identified people experiencing homelessness who did not have their own place to reside for at least 30 consecutive days, including individuals residing in temporary shelters, at someone else's place of residence, or on

the streets (HSABC, 2018). This Point-in-Time technique was able to reduce the possibility of counting the same individual repeatedly or counting someone inaccurately and generally involve announcements and incentives offered by service providers (Cowan et al. 1988). Homelessness has long been an urban issue; however, over the last few years, smaller communities have seen increases in the number of people who are homeless, or at risk of homelessness due, in part, to high housing costs and lack of affordable housing (Homelessness Services Association of BC, 2018). According to the Nanaimo Homeless Coalition (2020) and the Central and Northern Island United Way, approximately 425 people were living in an unsheltered place in 2020 in Nanaimo, and there was an increase of 90 people from 2018. The 2018 data showed 72% of people experiencing homelessness live in an unsheltered space, and the rest stayed in domestic violence habitations or emergency shelters (CNIUW, 2018).

**Factors contributing to homelessness.** Homelessness has two primary interconnected dimensions: a lack of secure, affordable accommodation and the fracturing of relations with families and communities of origin (Driscoll & Wood, 1998). Many other people are considered “precariously housed” or “at imminent risk” of becoming homeless, such as the very poor or those temporarily living with a family member or friends for lack of alternatives (Rossi & Wright, 1989, p.138). Social triggers of homelessness such as the death of a relative or close friend, the breakdown of a marital or cohabiting relationship, and disputes with co-tenants are a common theme in the literature (Crane & Warnes, 2006; Kemp et al., 2006). Although there are high rates of homelessness in industrialized countries, including the US with a count of 567,715 homeless persons (National Alliance to End Homelessness, 2020), the majority of homeless people live in developing countries affected by high rates of population growth, urbanization and underemployment. Rural–urban migration, chronic alcoholism, other substance-abuse disorders

and mental disorders, the lack of affordable housing, and the deinstitutionalization of the mentally ill are factors commonly associated with homelessness worldwide (Bachrach, 1992; Blau, 1992; Baum & Burnes, 1993; Lee, 1999).

### **Homelessness, Health and Wellbeing**

Ill health is both a contributor to and consequence of being homeless (Crane & Warnes, 2006; Darmon et al., 2001; Kemp et al., 2006). Homeless people may face more physical and psychological problems due to their living and social environment (John & Law, 2011). Conversely, functional decline due to physical and psychological problems is also one of the common reasons why people become homeless (Crane & Warnes, 2006), which partly explains the prevalence of ill health among people experiencing homelessness (John & Law, 2011).

**Physical health.** A health report of homelessness from the UK demonstrated that the health demand for people experiencing homelessness is very complicated (Atherton et al., 2004). According to this report, trauma, infestation, foot problems, sexual health problems and infections were observed as common health issues in this demographic. Simultaneously, a finding from another British health report showed that the health needs of people who experience homelessness were much higher than those not experiencing homelessness (Poulton et al., 2006). Research conducted in the US assessing the health of the male homeless population indicates this population is at high risk of diseases such as dental disease, emphysema and asthma, gastrointestinal reflux, dermatological conditions, cardiac disease and the novel coronavirus, COVID-19 (Brush & Powers, 2001; National Alliance to End Homelessness, 2020). Over the years, several scholars attempting to understand the causes of these health problems have determined that terrible living conditions could be the major attribution. For instance, living in a

cold and damp environment year-round may lead to negative health outcomes such as respiratory illness (Ballinger, 2002), and bad sanitary conditions result in a variety of infections (Synoground & Bruya, 2000). Atherton et al.'s (2004) report also pointed out that people who are experiencing homelessness run a higher risk of suffering bullying and trauma than others, which reflects the dangerous living conditions they face. Moreover, Crane and Warne's (2006) review confirms that poor health conditions, coupled with social and economic challenges, could be a primary reason people become, and remain, homeless.

**Mental health.** Stressors, defined as external disruptions to individual's routine and well-being, negatively affect the mental health of people who are homeless, especially with the combination of the past experience (events happened during childhood; e.g., trauma) and current experience (recent events; e.g., discrimination) (Montgomery et al., 2013; Tyler & Schmitz, 2013; Wright et al., 1998). A study showed that the adverse experiences during childhood were strongly correlated with mental disorders such as anxiety and depression (Lanius et al., 2010). As the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration showed, unstable life circumstances and lack of self-choice tended to be common for people experiencing homelessness (McCabe et al., 2001). When a person falls into the state of homelessness and is unable to sustain stable housing, personal feelings of control are impaired and mental health damaged. High pressure life circumstances coupled with risks associated with homelessness were frequently related to a spectrum of mental health symptomatology (Irwin et al., 2008; Fitzpatrick et al., 2003; Fitzpatrick & LaGory, 2011). In contrast, self-efficacy, or the feeling of self-autonomy (often experienced via leisure participation), have been shown to relieve external pressure from life and benefit mental health in this population (Elstad, 1998).

**Social health.** Social support and satisfying interpersonal relationships enhance self-efficacy and play an important role in moderating the impact of material deprivation on health (Elstad, 1998; Graham, 2002). Weare (2000) suggested that social health referred to the social aspects of mental health depending on different social contextualization. Keyes (1998) stated that social health was composed of five factors: social integration (the harmony among individual, society and community), social acceptance (degree of favorable judgement towards others) (Wrightsmann, 1991), social contribution (social outcomes within the capacity of the individual), social actualization (cognition of social potential and trajectory), and social coherence (adaptability to different types of social state and events). Some researchers suggest that if homeless people could perceive more social support, it would be possible to lower their mental health symptomatology (Taylor & Lynch, 2004; Lin et al., 1999; Fitzpatrick & LaGory, 2011). Social support also appears to be a significant mechanism for individuals who are homeless to lower or lessen the negative influence of traumatic life circumstances (LaGory et al., 1990; Irwin et al., 2008; Lee et al., 2010).

**Other features of wellbeing.** Dodge et al. (2012), noted that wellbeing is difficult to define precisely, which results in broad and blurred definitions of the concept. Some authors use the term wellbeing interchangeably with terms like wellness (Harari et al., 2005; Hattie et al., 2004) and quality of life (Cooke et al., 2016; Frisch et al., 1992). Ryff and Keyes (1995) proposed a psychological wellbeing model that consists of six elements: self-acceptance, positive relations with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, and personal growth. Substance use and abuse differentially impacts wellbeing for people experiencing homelessness. According to a series of British studies of homelessness, there is a high proportion of drug and alcohol abuse among people experiencing homelessness, regardless of age, (Crane & Warnes,

2001; Commander et al., 2002; Power & Hunter, 2001). Coincidentally, a Parisian study of people experiencing homelessness, who are living in a shelter, demonstrated a connection between homelessness, alcoholism and heavy drinking (Darmon et al., 2001). Excessive intake of alcoholic beverages coupled with poor nutrition also resulted in major health issues for this population. According to Kemp et al. (2006), alcohol abuse and injecting drugs were obvious causes of homelessness. Conversely, people experiencing homelessness who were abstinent from alcohol or drugs were more likely to secure housing.

In addition, Wright et al. (2005) implied that people experiencing homelessness are more likely to engage in risky behavior. For example, one of the reasons that a number of drug users with hepatitis C started injecting was their homeless situation. These people use unsanitary water and filters to inject drugs outdoors without suitable tools, which is a high-risk behavior. Moreover, some of them may improperly dispose of used needles, resulting in public health hazards. This collection of high-risk behaviors all result in decreased wellbeing across the six elements of wellbeing highlighted above.

### **Differences in the Experience of Homelessness Based on Housing Status**

People experiencing homelessness represent a wide spectrum of people with diverse experiences and life circumstances. For example, while two individuals may be classified as homeless, one may be living on the streets (i.e., unsheltered) while another has temporary housing (i.e., sheltered). According to Nyamathi et al. (2000), unsheltered individuals experiencing homelessness are more likely to engage in increased substance use while having less access to health services such as alcohol and drug abuse treatment programs. Without well-organized housing arrangements and assistance offered by service providers at temporary shelters, unsheltered people experiencing homelessness face more life challenges, including

emotional stress, higher risks of victimization, less preventive care and poorer health (Nyamathi et al., 2000). Unsheltered people experiencing homelessness are more likely to have physical and mental health issues, and less likely to have medical insurance than sheltered homeless persons (Petrovich et al., 2020). Compared to people living on the streets, individuals who are temporarily housed in shelters receive more services such to relieve daily stress, solve mental and physical health problems and improve living conditions (White & Newman, 2015). Unsheltered people are also more likely to be, or to have been barred from accessing shelter space for reasons such as their incarceration history (Ra et al., 2020).

### **Differences in the Experience of Homelessness Based on Gender**

Several studies have documented differences between men and women experiencing homelessness (Calsyn & Morse, 1990; Crystal, 1984; Roll et al., 1999; Smith & North, 1994). Generally, compared to men, women experiencing homelessness (particularly those with children) have shorter periods of homelessness for a number of reasons. First, women are generally underpaid and underemployed compared to men; thus, they have a higher probability of qualifying for and obtaining social charitable contributions and social services. Acosta and Toro (2000) showed that women who are homeless also have a lower likelihood of becoming addicted to drugs or being incarcerated due to less time spent homeless, a higher level of government assistance and higher possibility of being the primary caregiver for a child (see also Calsyn & Morse, 1990). Women, especially those with children, experience physical assault at a higher rate than men who are homeless (Roll et al., 1999). A Canadian study stated also that women are 7% more likely to care for the dependent child than men (Chambers et al., 2014). Homeless women with children also prefer and are more likely to obtain private living arrangement in shelters and other accommodations and have greater reliance on and access to

food providers (Burt & Cohen, 1989). Affected by domestic violence and when given no other option, women with children would rather choose to live as a homeless people on the street than be victimized by their partner (Hagen, 1987). However, women's understanding of public spaces is principally influenced by gender constraints and relevant to the high risk of danger encountered in public spaces (Day, 2000). Living on the 'streets' puts women who are homeless in an environment in which men typically hold more power (O'Grady & Gaetz, 2004). Wardhaugh (1999) pointed out that the streets are "quintessential male space" (p.104). The high proportion of men among street homeless populations means that the rules and customs of homeless living are based on (some) males' experiences, while women must accept these conditions or face the consequences of exclusion (Watson, 2016).

As constraints to homeless women's health care, Gelberg et al. (2004) stated that women experiencing homelessness suffer from long distance travel and unaffordable transportation to free clinics; limited consultation time and backlog; discriminatory service in the clinic; and lack of respect from service providers. There are a number of methods that can promote health and well-being for women experiencing homeless. However, the focus of this study is on leisure needs and leisure participation.

### **Leisure, Homelessness, and Health**

Leisure may function as a possible tool to address social problems such as marginalization, oppression, and other issues facing people who are homeless (Iwasaki et al., 2018). However, women experiencing homelessness encounter many leisure constraints (Chen & Pang, 2012) such as higher time pressure (Ghosh, 2016) and poor financial condition (Frisby & Millar, 2002). Leisure programs in the public sphere are often designed by staffs or decision-makers who have insufficient understanding of the real needs of people who are homeless

(Brown, & Wyatt, 2010). In order to address the current needs of people experiencing homelessness, it is essential and necessary to fully explore their actual needs as a starting point, and then implement plans for leisure activity that address those needs.

**Benefits of leisure.** Leisure plays a beneficial role for people experiencing homelessness by promoting their physical, social, and mental health and well-being (Boydell et al., 2000; Javaherian-Dysinger et al., 2016; McNaughton & Sanders, 2007; Raphael-Greenfield & Gutman, 2015; Thibeault, 2011; Weybright et al., 2015, 2016). Leisure can directly and indirectly contribute to health and wellbeing. As for its direct influence, a meta-analysis of experimental studies towards a sample of older adults provided evidence that interventions targeting the quality of leisure experience improved subjective wellbeing (Kuykendall et al., 2015). As for its indirect effect, leisure experiences can impact wellbeing by affecting other domains such as family satisfaction and job satisfaction (Hecht & Boies, 2009).

Documented benefits from recreation therapy interventions towards people experiencing homelessness such as yoga, church attendance, and leisure education (De Vries & Feenstra, 2019) include: creating opportunities for learning skills for independent living, reducing stress, improving self-esteem (Corring et al., 2010; Wolf & Riddick, 1984), providing opportunities for control, improving social skills (Snethen et al., 2012), promoting independence, and encouraging self-care (Knestaut et al., 2010; Kunstler, 1991, 1992; Tryssenaar et al., 1999).

Specific recreational activities that have resulted in positive benefits for people experiencing homelessness include: dancing, which could relieve pressure and strengthen social interactions (Knestaut et al., 2010); going to the library, which could increase social relationships and enlarge knowledge (Hodgetts et al., 2008); listening to music, watching TV, or socializing, which could divert attention away from or help individuals reduce stress (Klitzing, 2003);

developing personal skills such as stress management, confidence, and communication (Harrington & Dawson, 1997; Kunstler, 1991); and gardening, which could promote individual progress and social contact (Grabbe et al., 2013).

One identified benefit of recreation that is particularly relevant for individuals experiencing homelessness, who typically lack choice and voice, is empowerment (Harrington & Dawson, 1997; Iveson & Cornish, 2016). Empowerment is tied to autonomy, control and opportunities for personal decision-making (Harrington & Dawson, 1997; Iveson & Cornish, 2016), and is based on the theories of self-efficacy and self-determination (Cattaneo & Chapman, 2010; Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Ryan & Deci, 2017). Through participation in recreation and leisure, self-efficacy – the belief in one’s ability to accomplish a task – can be developed, as well as other benefits such as maintaining a sense of well-being, reducing stress, experiencing social inclusion, developing life skills, transforming one’s self, providing renewal and a sense of restoration, creating a sense of normalcy, and building connections (Grabbe et al., 2013; Harrington & Dawson, 1997; Iveson & Cornish, 2016; Knestaut et al., 2010; Kunstler, 1991; Wise, 2004).

Recreation and leisure participation, including recreation offered by service providers has a great deal to offer people experiencing homelessness: physical fitness, stress management, socialization and opportunities to develop friendship, opportunities to learn and set goals, self-esteem building. Furthermore, they may begin to help this population re-connect with a community through volunteer assistance and an inclusionary approach (Kunstler, 1992).

**Leisure constraints.** Crawford et al. (1991) proposed a hierarchical model of leisure constraints, which showed three common types of leisure constraints (i.e., elements that affect the quality or the desired level of leisure participation): intrapersonal constraints, interpersonal

constraints and structural constraints. Intrapersonal constraints are related to individual psychological states such as stress, religiosity and subjective evaluation of leisure activities (Kuykendall et al., 2018). Interpersonal constraints are related to factors such as social relations or the connection between personal characteristics, which would influence individuals' preference for particular leisure activities that may need a suitable partner (Crawford & Godbey, 1987). Structural constraints include external factors that may intervene between preference and participation such as time poverty, transport and lack of finance. People experiencing homelessness may encounter unique or heightened intrapersonal constraints such as high levels of stress and anxiety (Banyard & Graham-Bermann, 1998) especially for women (Fogel, 1997; Goodman et al., 1991; Huttman & Redmond, 1992; Thrasher & Mowbray, 1995), who tend to reactively respond to constraints as they occur rather than proactively planning around or through anticipated constraints (Klitzing, 2004). As for interpersonal constraints, women who are homeless have often experienced victimization by someone they know, such as partners (Breton & Bunston, 1992; Fisher et al., 1995), which leads to general distrust and difficulty building social connections (Wenzel et al., 2001). As for structural constraints, women (generally and in the context of homelessness) are often excluded in certain sports such as baseball (Kelly, 2011) because of male dominance and reinforced gender roles (Kay & Jeanes, 2008).

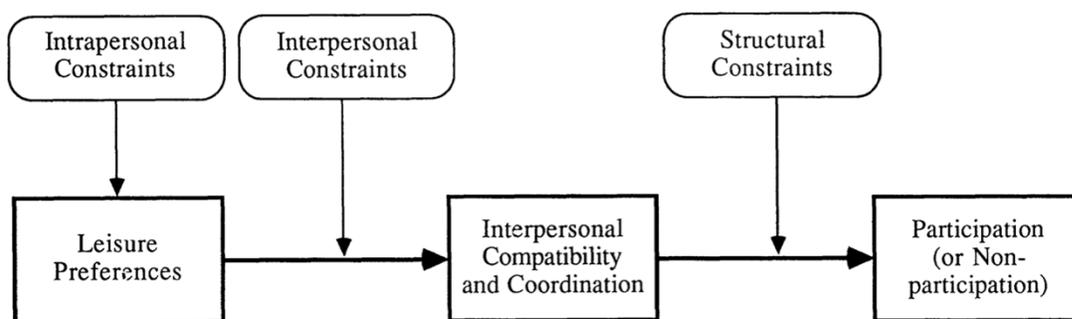


Figure 1. A hierarchical model of leisure constraints

As Johnson and Glover (2013) indicated, “it is incumbent upon leisure researchers to consider who is excluded from ‘public’ spaces, for no space is fully accessible to everyone at all times” (p. 195). One group that is consistently pushed out of public spaces and marginalized are those experiencing homelessness (Johnson & Glover, 2013). As an example, according to Schisler (2019), in some public spaces like Bowen park and Divers Lake park in Nanaimo, BC (the thesis context) homeless campers were regularly attacked by passersby with flying debris including rocks, rotten turkey necks and glass bottles. Moreover, because they did not have a permanent domicile, these individuals were often required to move several times in a night (Schisler, 2019). As another example, overnight camping is prohibiting in 77% of the Regional District of Nanaimo parks and limited to specific areas within the parks that are not in close proximity to water, private residences or environmentally sensitive areas (Wilson, 2020). The B.C. Supreme Court decision made in 2018, limited the time individuals can shelter in parks to the hours of 7 p.m. to 9 a.m. after which they must move their shelter away (Garland, 2020). In the city of Nanaimo, there is only one park that permits people who are homeless to use its showers, and many restrooms are locked to all people due to user conflicts (City of Nanaimo, 2019). In the downtown area of Nanaimo, homeless people camping around the A&B Sound building were evicted with the reason of fire safety issues (Bush, 2018). Within two months of their expulsion, a ‘humanity in art’ project was initiated that boarded up the useable shelter space and transformed the A&B into an outdoor mural art gallery (Sterritt, 2018). Shifting the discourse from safety, to creating a vibrant community environment, the art project excluded the homeless people from the building, moving them to other areas in the downtown core.

As noted above, and similar to the findings from previous leisure studies, women experience various, unique constraints to leisure (Little, 2002). They face financial barriers

associated with fee-based recreation programs and services (Frisby & Millar, 2002; Reid & Golden, 2005). This is in part mitigated and part worsened due to the fact that the recreation industry has shifted its concentration from “on outreach to vulnerable people, families and communities” to “individual-based, facility-focused, user-pay models” (Canadian Parks and Recreation Association & Interprovincial Sport and Recreation Council, 2015, p. 7). Khosla (2008) indicated that young women are typically excluded in funded projects in low-income communities, which tend to concentrate on prevention of crime for young men. Moreover, it is tougher for young women to meet informally in appropriate public spaces due to the decrease of drop-in programs resulting from reduced funding (Khosla, 2008).

A qualitative analysis discovered that although women experience various unique limitations (e.g., age, stress, gendered constraints, and social tolerance) (Little, 2002; Gelberg et al., 2004), they can negotiate these barriers by reorganizing their leisure or experiencing leisure differently in their life (Chen & Pang, 2012). However, women experiencing homelessness often lack the time, resources, or capacity to engage in these types of negotiation strategies. Focusing on homeless women’s identities, Casey et al. (2008) proposed three strategies women who are homeless use to negotiate exclusion from public recreation spaces; he noted, that to establish that they are legitimate citizens, entitled to use of public spaces, women who are homeless seek to: maintain their ‘pre-homeless’ status; present a respectful impression or image to other users; and show dis-identification to stigmatized people who are homeless. Greater attention has been given to assisting people who are homeless by making certain recreation activities and spaces more accessible for this population, such as opening public libraries to homeless patrons (Casey et al., 2008; Klitzing, 2003).

*Leisure Education as a strategy to negotiate constraints.* According to Gunn and Peterson (1977), leisure education was defined as a program using leisure time creatively to cultivate new knowledge, abilities and skills (Brightbill & Mobley, 1977). The goals of leisure education are to equip individuals with knowledge and skills to participate in leisure activities, sufficient understanding of the importance of leisure and how they could integrate leisure into their life (Sivan & Stebbins, 2011). The goal of leisure education is to help people have a meaningful leisure lifestyle and increase quality of life (Stebbins, 1998).

Due to lack of transportation, long distances to recreation resources, and other access issues related to participation in leisure activities, such as the documented degrading attitude of relevant staff (Scott, 2013; Trussell & Mair, 2010), people experiencing homelessness have limited opportunities to develop leisure skills and have leisure experiences (Hiebert & Oncescu, 2015). With these exclusions, women with children also encounter a lack of knowledge and barriers to know how to engage in available programs and resources (Green, 2001).

To facilitate normalcy and reintegrate into the community, leisure education can be used to enhance recreational skills (Roder et al., 1998), help individuals structure and manage their time, and increase awareness of their own interests and resources (Dail, 1992; Grabbe et al., 2013; Kunstler, 1991, 1992; McNulty et al., 2009). A study towards children demonstrated that leisure education programs had a positive influence on the children's confidence and self-esteem, enhancing individual skills such as problem-solving, independent thinking, and resulting in a more diverse leisure repertoire (Hiebert & Oncescu, 2015). Also, children's families were benefited from this program because parents could manage their time better and strengthen family connection.

## **Leisure, Needs, Motivations and Preferences**

Maslow (1943) first suggested a hierarchy of needs, including five levels (Physiological, Safety and Security, Belongingness and Love, Ego and Esteem, and Self-Actualization).

Physiological needs were meant to be the basic biological needs for survival, such as sleep, water and oxygen. Safety needs referred to those things that protect people from harm, including emotional security, financial security and personal security. Belongingness and love needs were shown as the relationships between individuals and friends, family and other social groups. Self-esteem needs were status needs or ego needs for human to be respected and recognized by self or by others. The highest need was self-actualization, meaning the accomplishment of everything that individual can by taking advantage of their potential. Initially, Maslow (1943) stated that a higher need could not be satisfied until its corresponding lower need was met (i.e., individuals can only start to satisfy safety needs after they have met all their physiological needs). However, he clarified that the perspective towards the order of needs was too absolute for the “all or none” phenomenon (Maslow, 1987).

Although Maslow’s hierarchy is widely used, many criticisms of the theory have existed in the leisure science realm (Walker et al., 2019). Some scholars implied that the core ideas of this theory were extremely ambiguous and vague. For instance, Cramer (2013) indicated that Maslow’s hierarchy was inadequate to explain a broad range of cases because it has plenty of omissions, such as a lack of sensitivity to contextual factors and lack of empirical support, testing, and precision (Walker et al., 2019). Ryan and Deci (2017) further argued that Maslow’s hierarchy was popularly cited by many textbooks, but it was still “thin” owing to a lack of practical studies to support it. They pointed out that the hierarchy of needs does not consider counterintuitive examples such as travelers and soldiers who often pursue goals at risk of

experiencing harm to their health, self-esteem or security. In other words, higher level needs are pursued despite lower level needs not being satisfied, which runs counter to the theory's tenets (Chen et al., 2015).



Figure 2. Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Retrieved from:

<https://www.simplypsychology.org/maslow.html>

**Needs of people experiencing homelessness.** People who are homeless have unmet physiological needs such as insufficient food, clothes, shelter and personal safety (Rodriguez et al., 2009). Hersberger (2005) showed that homeless persons may require everyday life information about finances, social connection, childcare, housing, health care for both themselves and others, employment, public assistance, transportation, education and affordable health care to address unmet safety and security needs. Moreover, seventy-three percent of the respondents in one study reported at least one unmet health need, including an inability to obtain needed medical or surgical care (32%), prescription medications (36%), mental health care (21%), eyeglasses (41%), and dental care (41%). In multivariable analyses, significant predictors of unmet needs included food insufficiency, out-of-home placement as a minor, vision impairment, and lack of health insurance (Baggett et al., 2010). According to the government of

BC (2019), people living in financial poverty also suffer from a reduced sense of belonging that results from isolation in their communities, where discrimination and stigma from other community members make it harder for them to find work, obtain services and be involved in society. They lack community empowerment and privacy (ego and esteem needs) (Stephen et al., 2016). Social inclusion should be part of communities to promote cultural diversity and harmonious spaces. Problems of homelessness often go unaddressed and persist on a huge scale, comprising a way of life for millions of the world's citizens (Midgley, 1990). In addition to the needs described above individuals who are homeless may have unmet leisure needs (which may align with their hierarchical needs for security, safety, belonging, esteem, and self-actualization).

**Leisure needs.** According to Walker et al. (2019), needs could be divided into two categories: needs derived from our inherited biological nature (physiological needs) and needs derived from autonomy, social connection, and competent living (psychological needs).

*Physiological needs* mirror Maslow's hierarchy and are tied to survival; they include the need for adequate water, oxygen and nutrition. Furthermore, distinct from other animals, human beings have additional physiological needs, such as the need for information flow, stimulation, and optimal arousal. The need for optimal arousal which arises from the process of seeking stimulation is associated with participation in play (Ellis, 1973), exploration (Berlyne & Crozier, 1971) and other types of leisure activities (Iso-Ahola, 1982).

*Psychological needs.* According to the basic psychological needs theory proposed by Ryan and Deci (2017), and oft cited by leisure scholars, there are three psychological needs: the need for autonomy (individual, authentic, volitional and self-endorsed decision-making), the need for competence (ability for individuals to attain the goals effectively) and the need for relatedness (capacity to connect and be a part of social circle) (Deci & Ryan, 1991).

*Neulinger's Paradigm* (1974, 1981) identifies four fundamental modes of activity that could be used to analyze the level of perceived freedom and the type of motivation that guide participation in an activity (Figure 3). Perceived freedom is regarded as a primary factor of leisure experiences (Gunter & Gunter, 1980; Iso-Ahola, 1982; Kelly, 1972) and is defined by Neulinger as "a state in which the person feels that what she or he is doing is done by choice and because one wants to do it" (p.15). Neulinger's paradigm divides motivation into two parts, intrinsic motivation (rewards derived from the activity itself) (1974) and extrinsic motivation (external incentives of the activity, such as praise, money and honors).

Figure 3 below represents four kinds of activities categorized by the connection between the degree of perceived freedom and types of motivation: pure job, pure work, leisure-job, and pure leisure. Leisure-job and pure leisure are at a high level of perceived freedom versus pure job and pure work, which have lower levels of perceived freedom. Pure work and pure leisure are categorized as intrinsically motivated activities and job and leisure-job are both categorized as extrinsically motivated. According to Neulinger (1974), pure work and pure job cannot be deemed leisure activities because their perceived freedom is low. Thus, the discussion that follows will focus on pure leisure and leisure-job as they have a high level of perceived freedom.

Pure leisure activities represent activities that are freely chosen by people and that are intrinsically motivated. For example, people go hiking in the mountain to because they enjoy the outdoors and movement, but not necessarily because they are seeking the instrumental health benefits of cleaner air and exercise associated with the activity (Leitner & Leitner, 2004).

Leisure-job activities are those in which leisure is pursued for a certain purpose, rather than for enjoyment of the activity in and of itself. For instance, people may do some outdoor activities with their friends to meet their social demands rather than because they enjoy the outdoors.

Neulinger’s Paradigm will explain how women experiencing homelessness in this thesis research made leisure activities choices and classified their leisure needs.

Perceive Freedom	Type of Motivation	
	Extrinsic	Intrinsic
Constrained	Pure Job	Pure Work
Free	Leisure-Job	Pure Leisure

Figure 3. Neulinger’s “Leisure Paradigm”

Based on social psychology, *Iso-Ahola (1982) proposed a theory of leisure motivation*, known as Iso-Ahola’s escaping-seeking dichotomy. This theory shows that individual’s satisfaction from leisure activity is affected by two motivational components: approach (seeking) and avoidance (escape). Someone involved in a leisure activity may experiences psychological satisfaction, for example, because they get intrinsic rewards from seeking achievement and escaping the routines and rigid schedule of life. Both approach and avoidance can be subdivided into personal and interpersonal aspects. As shown in the Iso-Ahola social psychologic model of leisure motivation (1984), there are four motivational categories: Escaping Interpersonal Environments, (EIE), Escaping Personal Environments (EPE), Seeking Personal Rewards (SPR), Seeking Interpersonal Rewards (SIR). In the context of a study of tourist’s participation in a guided tour, tourists were attracted by knowledge curiosity and social interaction (e.g., approach; Dunn Ross & Iso-Ahola, 1991). This research also showed that these participants aspired to escape (i.e., avoidance) from the previous paid employment and other obligations. In this study,

knowledge curiosity refers to tourists' desired personal rewards and social interaction refers to their interpersonal rewards. On the contrary, previous paid work ties to tourists' interpersonal and personal environments that they want to escape and do not want to face during their journey.

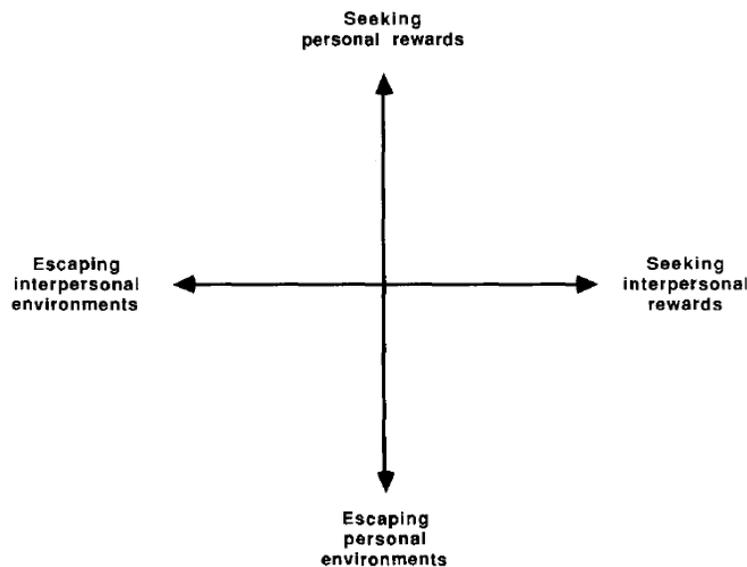


Figure 4. Seeking and Escaping Dimensions of Leisure Motivation (from Iso-Ahola, 1984)

The following criteria may provide additional insight into how individual needs are manifest. First, context matters. For example, an individual's culture influences their leisure motivation and participation, as does the society in which the individual lives. Individuals make their leisure choices within a social context, so the dominant values of the society will, to a large extent, determine what activity choices are available. It is difficult (if not impossible) to understand individual leisure motivation without understanding the social contexts the individual is experiencing. Second, the focus on intrinsic motivation and leisure constraints negotiation has led to important advances in the field of leisure motivation. Studying the sources of intrinsic motivation (with a focus on causal mechanisms) is particularly relevant because it is important to know how to foster intrinsic motivation in applied settings (Keller & Bless, 2008). Research in which the relationship between intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation is investigated,

along with an examination of how those types of motivation are related to leisure experience, is needed (Chen & Pang, 2012). Defined by Crandall (1980, p.46), leisure motivation is “a need, reason, or satisfaction that stimulates involvement in a leisure activity” with components of intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation. Factors of intrinsic motivation include the following: curiosity, challenge, control, recognition, cooperation, competition and fantasy (Santos-Longhurst, 2019). Extrinsic motivation includes four types: external motivation (behavior with purpose of obtaining rewards or avoiding punishment), introjected motivation (action in order to escape from self-recrimination and guilt), identified motivation (aspiration to show one’s faith or value) and integrated motivation (individual’s belief as a part of commitments and principles) (Deci et al., 1999; Hayamizu, 1997). While these theories are understood generally, they have received limited use in studies of people who are homeless.

In sum, the leisure needs of people experiencing homelessness are a neglected area of research, despite the clear benefits that leisure may provide this population. It is also clear that there are still a number of constraints to leisure resources and programs that limit need satisfaction for people experiencing homelessness, particularly homeless women. Without sufficient understanding of the leisure needs of women experiencing homelessness, it is difficult to respond to those needs appropriately and effectively. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to explore the leisure needs and preferences of women experiencing homelessness in Nanaimo, BC. This thesis research is part of a larger design thinking project aimed at providing better leisure conditions for this population. The research questions guiding this thesis include:

1. What does leisure mean to women of lived experience with homelessness residing in Samaritan house in Nanaimo?

2. What are the leisure needs of women with lived experience with homelessness residing in Samaritan house in Nanaimo?

## **Chapter Three: Methods**

### **Study Design**

This project represents a collaboration between Island Crisis Care Society, Samaritan House and the Department of Recreation and Tourism Management at Vancouver Island University, Nanaimo, BC. The project thus engaged people from different disciplines such as recreation and tourism management, success coaching and social services with rich understanding of women living in Nanaimo's Samaritan House. The study is oriented in the transformative paradigm and uses secondary data collected via community-based and participatory action approaches (i.e., design thinking) to "address project complexity", to engage participants in the research process, and to ensure that multiple dimensions of the problem are considered (Glen et al., 2014, p. 660).

### **Worldview**

This study is based on transformative worldview. Entwined with politics (Mertens, 2010), the transformative worldview revolves around marginalized people and aims to address significant social issues including discrimination, inequality, exclusion and empowerment (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). In this thesis, the target population is women experiencing homelessness and the research method aims to capture their authentic voice (Creswell & Creswell, 2017) to showcase their real leisure needs. As one of the most vulnerable groups in the society (Gloger, et al., 2004), women experiencing homelessness confront a number of leisure constraints (Little, 2002), inequalities (O'Grady & Gaetz, 2004) and social exclusion (Johnson & Glover, 2013). The goal of research under the transformative paradigm perspective should focus on addressing social issues, especially oppression against marginalized groups, by linking with a political change agenda (Mertens, 2010). Thus, transformative research includes an action approach that may lead to social changes in participants' lives, researchers' lives and in the

patterns and policy of relevant institutions (Creswell, 2014). The findings of this study may help related organizations and social workers to obtain a better understanding of the leisure needs of women who are homeless and provide effective services and benefits.

### **Secondary Data Analysis**

Hakim (1982) defines secondary analysis as “any further analysis of an existing dataset which presents interpretations, conclusions or knowledge additional to, or different from, those presented in the first report on the inquiry as a whole and its main results” (p. 1). Data in this thesis were initially collected by faculty members in the Department of Recreation and Tourism Management, Faculty of Management, at Vancouver Island university as part of a larger project using design thinking to understand and design for the leisure, well-being and faith-based needs of residents of the Samaritan House, a temporary shelter for women experiencing homelessness in Nanaimo BC. I joined the research team as a data analyst and had full knowledge of how the data were collected and prepared for analysis. Thus, I will first introduce how the data were collected, analyzed and interpreted by the primary investigators to create a report provided to Samaritan House in Nanaimo. I will then explain how this thesis, as a subsequent study, re-analyzed, interpreted and developed conclusions from the original dataset (Smith, 2008) with a specific focus on leisure needs and opportunities. As a student studying leisure, I would like to use the theoretical knowledge I learned from my coursework to assist homeless women in improving their life quality.

### **Researcher Position**

As an international student who has studied in Canada since September in 2018, I saw the “tent city” in Nanaimo as the largest gathering of people who are homeless that I have seen in Canada. The tent city was new and interesting to me because I have never seen people who are

homeless gather as a group or community. When it comes to my daily routine, I often live a fixed life like going to home, school and the supermarket, and I have my preferred leisure activities like sightseeing in other cities on the weekend. I have never communicated or even talked with people experiencing homelessness in Nanaimo because I seldom see them (further evidence they are an “invisible” minority) except when I passed by tent city downtown. As a newcomer, I am particularly interested in all Canadian cultures including the homeless culture. During my coursework at VIU, I learned about leisure theory and sustainability in BC. However, I had yet to fully connect this new knowledge to my actual life and my surrounding community. Therefore, when I heard about the project working with women of lived experience with homelessness, I felt very excited to become a member of this research group, to explore this population.

As a Chinese national, I lived in Guangzhou (the capital of Guangdong province and third biggest city in China), although homelessness is a relatively negative aspect of my country, I always take a respectful and understanding stance towards this population. For the purpose of presenting a better impression of the city, the local government in Guangzhou – like the governments of large cities – send people who are homeless to shelters to keep them off the streets. Viewed as beggars, these people are typically judged as underdogs and “ungainers” by the public. Although passersby may give them money or food to support their basic needs, the homeless population is generally disrespected. When I personally meet these people in need on the road, whether in China or Canada, I also give them some change or food to support their life and try to give them the same respect I give to everyone. In this study, when comparing people with lived experience of homelessness, I feel that there are lots of differences between the homeless situation in China and Canada. The word “homeless” in North America is replaced with words like “beggar” and “tramp” in China. The main cause of being a “beggar” in China is

the high financial pressure associated with life in the big city – particularly in areas such as Peking, Shanghai and Guangzhou, with a population of more than 15 million people. Some of them become beggars for reasons such as not being able to go to work because of physical disability, mental health, unaffordable medical fees and non-assistance from family.

A few years before leaving China, I saw a large homeless group staying under an overpass, in a pedestrian tunnel or on the side of the street, which correlated with dirty public spaces and complaints of citizens. Since 2011, the government of China started focusing on the poverty problem and the homeless population became one of the targets of the project (Long, 2019). As for my hometown Guangdong province, from 2017 to 2019, the provincial government assisted more than 150,000 homeless people with services including basic life necessities assistance, medical assistance, assistance seeking their origin family, and shelter placement, which successfully helped 5,388 of these people find their family and go back to their own home (Department of Civil Affairs of Guangdong Province, 2019). Although there are still a few beggars on the street in China now, it feels much cleaner and safer to walk outside. Through the huge social change of the homeless population, I reflected that it is essential to deal with issues of people experiencing homelessness in appropriate and acceptable ways. Bringing them back to their family as an example, especially for the context and culture of China, is a culturally appropriate solution. Family is always the most important position of the individual, and support from family would be warm and powerful assistance for the individual's experiencing homelessness to live a new life and integrate into society. Similarly, when I think of a corresponding solution to the leisure problem of women experiencing homelessness, I should also consider their cultural and environmental background to come up with the most suitable and acceptable solution for them.

## **Community Based Participatory Action Research**

According to Israel et al. (2003), CBPAR involves “a long-term process and commitment to integrate and achieve a balance between research and action for the mutual benefit of all partners”, which facilitates “co-learning and capacity building among all partners” and promotes “collaborative, equitable partnerships in all phases of the research” (pp. 56-58). Nothing about me without me is the banner of the community based participatory action research approach. The phrase means every individual with lived experience of homelessness should be fairly involved in the research process to promote equality of representation from and to policymakers, relevant service institutions, government and others, to facilitate using a balanced approach to end homelessness society (Lived Experience Advisory Council, 2016). Community based participatory action research is an approach that relies on multidimensional and wide-range partnerships (Schulz & Parker, 2005) with initiation by community members and collaborative initiation and control by universities or other professional institutions (Minkler & Wallerstein, 2003). In this study, inquirers focused on community issues and involved women experiencing homelessness in Nanaimo. Moreover, researchers coordinated with Samaritan House in Nanaimo to connect with women experiencing homelessness, collect data and begin brainstorming strategies to promote well-being for residents living at their house. In the research process, all partners engaged in different parts of data collection and everyone had the same aim to facilitate the development of Samaritan House and its residents.

## **Design thinking**

The design thinking approach is akin to other user-centered approaches, such as community based participatory action research. In community based participatory action research, all potential stakeholders are involved in the whole research process, whereas in design

thinking, particular emphasis is on the experience of the end user who may ultimately benefit from these outcomes or solutions. Design thinking is regarded as an innovative and creative, interdisciplinary approach to solve the world's wicked problems (Brown, 2008; Liedtka, 2015; Martin, 2009); it is characterized as both a set of principles and a process. Some principles of design thinking include: "Creativity and Innovation", "User-Centeredness and Involvement", "Problem Solving", "Interdisciplinary Collaboration", and "Blending Analysis and Intuition" (Micheli et al., 2019). The process of design thinking commonly includes five iterative steps (Voltage Control, 2019). The first step is *empathizing*: the researcher gains valuable information and seeks to understand participants' experience and context, usually through face-to-face interactions or observations. *Define* is the second step. Drawing from the empathy data, the participants' unmet needs are explored and identified, and a problem-statement is created. Then researchers *ideate* or brainstorm solutions to address the issues and satisfy those unmet needs. The filtered and viable *prototype* ideas are then transformed to the physical form in order to get feedback from participants and revised based on participant comments. The last step is *test*. The final prototype designed by researchers is implemented or provided to the people they intended to serve and evaluated to determine whether it addressed the original problem or not. If the outcome is in conflict with the desired effect, researchers will adjust the prototype based on the feedback. This thesis primarily focuses on the first two phases, empathizing and problem identification, to explore leisure experience and needs of this population.

The design thinking approach emphasizes participants-centeredness (Brown & Katz, 2011; Martin, 2011) and takes participants' needs into account through perspective-taking processes (Connell & Tenkasi, 2015) with consideration of relevant context (Beverland et al., 2015). With an integrative perspective, design thinking solicits a range of opinions of different

people and enables researchers to rethink and reflect on the whole research process to identify relative insights (Gruber et al., 2015; Nedergaard & Gyrd-Jones, 2013). Approaches including photo voice interview, focus group and photo elicitation are used to better understand participants' perspective and develop a more comprehensive analysis with different kinds of data to meet their unmet leisure needs. Data from this study could inform the next phases in the design thinking process, brainstorming solutions and building prototypes to better address leisure needs of women at Samaritan House (Dorst, 2011).

### **Methodology: Qualitative Research**

The secondary data upon which this thesis research is based, utilized a qualitative methodology. The two primary methods employed in the collection of that dataset include a photo-voice exercise paired with a semi-structured interview, as well as a photo elicitation exercise paired with a semi-structured focus group. These two methods similarly rely on images and subjective meanings tied to those images; however, they have distinct processes for data collection and analysis (Creswell, 2018), which will be discussed in a later section. There are some basic characteristics of qualitative research generally that apply to this thesis research specifically: Natural setting, Researcher as key instrument, Multiple sources of data, Inductive and deductive data analysis, Participants' meanings, Emergent design, Reflexivity, and Holistic account (Creswell, 2015; Hatch, 2002; Marshall & Rossman, 2016). In terms of the natural setting, the use of interviews in this study enabled participants to share their experience or opinions at their familiar living place and social space (Samaritan house and Selby Street Mission, both located in Nanaimo) or within their context instead of on campus or in an artificial lab environment. As key instruments, inquirers participated in all parts of the research including choosing research method, conducting research, making observations during the interview

process, analyzing data and drawing the conclusion of the study. Different approaches (face to face interview, focus group and photo voice and elicitation) were used to collect participants' perspective, interpret and code their data into different themes inductively and iteratively.

### **Study Context**

**City of Nanaimo.** Located on the east side of Vancouver Island on the unceded territory of the Snuneymuxw First Nation, the city of Nanaimo is a harbor city with a population of 90,504 (Statistics Canada, 2017). It is 113km north of Victoria with one hour and 30 minutes' drive and 55 km across the Strait of Georgia from Vancouver with regular ferry sailings. As large-scale cities with huge populations, these two neighbor cities also face homelessness problems, having more than three times the homeless population than that of Nanaimo (City of Vancouver, 2020; COH, 2019). Formally known as the 'hub city' in part due to its accessible, central location on the island, Nanaimo is known for its variety of recreation and tourism resources including Mount Benson with an altitude of 1000+ kilometers, the Pacific Ocean shoreline, Newcastle Island (Saysutshun), and hundreds of parks. People can experience a number of outdoor leisure programs in this city such as kayaking, golf, hiking and biking. Roughly 425 people are living in an unsheltered place in Nanaimo in 2020 (Nanaimo Homeless Coalition, 2020).

Approximately 77% of parks in Nanaimo prohibited overnight camping and the homeless population often experience being driven out by the royal Canadian mounted police several times in a night (Schisler, 2019; Wilson, 2020). According to Nanaimo News Staff (2018), in 2018 Nanaimo City Council refused to build supportive housing for people experiencing homelessness to help them transition to more permanent housing. As a result, more than 10 people with lived experience of homelessness-built camps on the lawn of Nanaimo City Hall on March of that year and then moved to 1 Port Drive in May, as a larger group, after being evicted by the Nanaimo

government. The new place was called both “tent” city and “discontent” city (as it became more politicized and public), and it grew to a population of approximately 300 people in a matter of a few months. In September, due to a lack of leadership in tent city, crime issues and safety issues in and around the encampment, the Supreme Court of British Columbia required residents in the tent city to move out by December. In December, tent city in Nanaimo was demolished and these people were required to move to two temporary housing with 170 units provided by government (Nanaimo News Staff, 2018). As for this event, one member of Alliance Against Displacement claimed that it was an institutional and repressive action towards homeless population to evict people from the discontent city, which took away the rights of people. However, after one year of the demolition of tent city, the housing issues still existed and even worsened. There are still more than 400 people experiencing absolute homelessness and they live on the street or in temporary shelters (Sterritt, 2019).

According to the Regional District of Nanaimo (2019), in Nanaimo, there is one winter-shelter (Nanaimo - The Centre Winter Shelter) and four year-around shelters for different groups of people (Women - Island Crisis Care Society, Samaritan House; Men - The Salvation Army, New Hope Centre; Youth - Friendship Lelum Youth Safe House; Men and Women - Nanaimo Unitarian Shelter). The emergency shelter studied in this thesis is Samaritan House belonging to the Island Crisis Care Society.

**Island Crisis Care Society.** Island Crisis Care Society, established in 1989, is a non-profit entity based in Nanaimo and Oceanside, BC. The vision of ICCS is “to provide shelter and care for those in need, reflecting the love of God in loving one another” (Island crisis care society, n.d., p.1). ICCS has a wide range of services for people in need, including emergency shelter, stabilization, transitional housing, supportive recovery, sobering beds, supportive

housing and outreach. There was a total of 117 staff members working and 789 clients served from March 2019 to March 2020 (Island Crisis Care Society, 2020). The ICCS cooperates with BC Housing and the Vancouver Island Health Authority, and they received funds from Service Canada, the City of Nanaimo and other government agencies (Island Crisis Care Society, 2019). Their crisis stabilization housing, supported by the work of professional health care workers, enables women who need help in a vulnerable time to stay in a safe place, have a stable life and learn skills to integrate into the society again.

**Samaritan House.** Samaritan House provides a safe atmosphere and offers empathy and emotional support to women and women with kids who are experiencing a most difficult time in their lives. There are 24 staff working at Samaritan House. This organization takes care of women in need with basic supplies such as living space, clothing, hygiene and nourishment. Moreover, it offers “on-site case management, and referrals to community resources and programs” (Island Crisis Care Society, 2019, p.2). Samaritan House is composed of six supportive housing beds in Martha’s Place (the upper story of the House), six transitional beds in Mary’s Place near Woodgrove and fourteen emergency shelter beds in the main House. They also provide rent subsidies to women who are unable to stay in the House (Island Crisis Care Society, 2019). With no limited time for stay, Martha’s place provides an ongoing shelter for women without ability to live independently or fully self-sufficient to stabilize their life, and it offers services including dinner, a private room, all-day access and supervision to care workers and outreach workers. With staying time from 30 days to three years, Mary’s place is a therapeutic community. It provides shared living space, individual bus pass and outreach workers with the aim to help women become independent and self-sufficient. The emergency shelter beds have a 30-day shelter limit, though individuals can leave and then return for an additional 30

days. As for the five subsidies in market housing, women inspected by a triage committee can obtain rent subsidies and get a market unit, room, studio, or apartment. In 2020, Samaritan House on Nicol St. is going to move to the South side of the street into a 40-bed supportive housing complex, and the previous building will be rebuilt as a 50-unit supportive housing complex (Spencer, 2020). Additionally, a “day use” space has been proposed to support those women who cannot remain sheltered throughout the day and have few inclusive spaces to go. One reason the original research upon which this thesis is based was started was to create a plan for the new “day use” space which would be built to provide services to these women who must leave their shelters during the day.

According to the annual report proposed by Island Crisis Care Society (2020), during the period from March 2019 to March 2020, Samaritan House has served 238 unique clients and the annual occupancy of its beds reached up to 91.6 percent. When it comes to feelings about work, one staff in Samaritan House perceived great successes and described the sense of “home” (rather than sense of shelter) that residents in their place experience. They further noted, residents became more motivated and believed in themselves through continuous effort and care provided by workers. An exciting update for staff was that one long-term resident in Mary’s place successfully moved to an affordable apartment operated by Nanaimo Affordable Housing. Bothered by COVID-19, the biggest challenge for Samaritan House is “having to turn away clients when full, insufficient space for social distancing, and the inability to accommodate hard to house and street-entrenched women” (Island Crisis Care Society, 2020, p.12). Insufficient resources and training are also significant problems for this emergency shelter to assist residents to deal with their mental health challenges. After the pandemic began, less people from other communities came to Samaritan House and this place became quieter than normal. In this tough

case, all staff become a more united team to take good care of everyone and try their best to keep all people safe. These concerns provide evidence of the dual crisis experienced by certain groups such as people who are homeless, addicted to opiates, etc. who simultaneously must deal with their current crisis *and* the coronavirus pandemic and its effects.

### **Population and Sampling**

Participants in this study were selected using a non-probability, convenience sampling method. The principal investigator for the project had a prior relationship with Island Crisis Care Society, Samaritan House (including Martha's Place), and Selby Street Mission, and had met residents there. Though the population of people experiencing homelessness in Nanaimo is diverse (sheltered v. unsheltered, sober v. in addiction, etc.), women of lived experience with homelessness residing in Samaritan House and Martha's place were selected as the concentration of this research. These sheltered women were systematically different from other women experiencing homelessness in the area given that they: had their own safe space; received physical and mental assistance from either staff in shelters or social workers coordinated by Samaritan House; were identified by staff as being more sober; and volunteered for the research process. In this study, a total of ten (10) women experiencing homelessness, currently or recently residing in either Samaritan House or Martha's place in Nanaimo initiated participation in the photo voice process. All ten women participated in the introductory session on how to use the camera and the ethics of picture taking. However, only eight took photos, and only five of those eight shared their pictures and interpretations of those pictures with the project lead (see Table 1). Those who chose not to participate had a variety of reasons, such as new job opportunities, personal difficulties and challenges, or lack of sustained interest. There were nine (9) women involved in the focus group and the Photo Elicitation process. Two of them walked to Selby

Street Mission, and the rest came there by van. However, only eight people's opinions were recorded because one person left before the focus group began.

Participants were recruited in three ways. First, two weeks before the interview process began, Samaritan's House Staff hung posters describing the study in the common areas of the house. The content of the poster included information about the research activities and how to participate (see Appendix A). In addition, the investigators joined a House meeting one week prior to data collection to further introduce the project and distribute consent documents to residents who wished to participate. Thirdly, the staff in Samaritan House included information about the research in new intake packets to ensure new residents could also participate in the research. During the recruitment process, the Samaritan House staff were only responsible for providing project information and collecting consent forms, to mitigate undue influence to participate.

## **Data Collection**

Data were collected during June in 2019 using a combination of photo-based methods (generating and reflecting on visual materials) and interviews/ focus groups (Creswell, 2018). As noted above, the photo-voice exercise was paired with interviews while the photo-elicitation exercise was paired with a focus group.

### **Photo-based methods**

**Photo-voice.** The usage of photovoice in the original project, upon which this thesis is based, aimed to help people gain a greater understanding of homeless leisure life through the lens of the residents of Samaritan House. Residents of Samaritan House used images to tell their stories about how health is supported through leisure and faith-based experiences and environments. Participants were provided a camera and up to a week to capture pictures related

to the research topic. As for the details of pictures, they were asked to take pictures of actions, activities, places and things that satisfy or support their leisure/ faith/ spiritual/ social/ intellectual/ emotional/ physical needs and wellbeing. Moreover, pictures of activities, places and things that may prevent them from satisfying or supporting their needs and wellbeing were also requested.

Table 1

Photovoice Interview Participants

Pseudonym	Age	Personality	Experience	Lifestyle
Sally	20's	She lives her own path and positive energy, and love is very important to her.	She has a job locally with a commute by bus. And she is working on a further certificate.	She would like to create a business to sell her own art.
Megan	70's	Quiet and had a warm smile	She did her nurse training in US. but was not able to do nursing here without first doing a year of course work and decided to quit nursing. She has survived three husbands.	She showered every day to fit in on the street.
Yen	About 50's	Relatively quiet and introverted	She got a diploma certificate. She was a single mom, and she has a grown son who is married and is expecting his first child.	
Don			She used to be abused and hurt in the past marriage and she tried to get out from the traumatic experience by drinking a lot and hiding negative feelings. Afterwards, she started to believe in God and her life came to a huge change and met a nice man who protected her well.	Her authentic self is with God is. God to her is a comfort, and her image of God is a loving person.
Kal		With great empathy.	She lost one of her family members in recent year. She looked after that one until he passed.	Love life and would get angry because people are wasting their lives. Believe in "It takes two" to support life.

After they finished photo collection, participants were asked to explain reasons why they took the pictures and how the pictures reflected their leisure, faith, and wellbeing (see Appendix A for step-by-step photovoice instructions).

**Photo elicitation and focus group.** First proposed by John Collier (1957), photo elicitation is a form of data collection that combines visual images with words. In the human brain, visual information has a deeper level of consciousness and elicits different kinds of information than words alone (Harper, 2002). In photo voice, participants generate the images, to describe themselves or their experiences, but in photo elicitation the researchers provide the images and participants react to those images in relation to their thoughts or experience. The intention of using this method is to know more about women's perspective towards leisure, well-being and faith by recognizing relevant pictures and discussing with others, such that new ideas that did not emerge in individual interviews might surface. At the beginning of the photo elicitation process, the researchers collected signed consent forms, and introduced the photo elicitation process at the same time. Participants were invited to meet together in an offsite location – Selby Street Mission. This location was chosen because Samaritan House doesn't have enough space and the because the Selby Street Mission was a safe and familiar space for many of the participants, as it serves the same population. Then the leader explained the study briefly and placed flip chart paper showing the two aims of the study on the walls of the dining room. Participants were required to write down their perspective towards leisure, faith and well-being, and they were presented some cards with different images and phrases that were intended to represent diverse perspectives of leisure, well-being and faith, respectively. They could write their ideas, associated words or activities on sticky notes and attach the notes to specific images. After all cards were collected, all participants and the researcher sat in a circle to start a new

conversation. They were asked if these photos inspired their ideas, experiences, or memories of leisure, wellbeing and faith. Moreover, inquirers invited them to talk about activities supporting wellbeing or a positive vision that they wanted to add to their life. Specific questions included things like: “What do the words leisure, faith, and wellbeing mean to you? Which images, words, or symbols printed on these cards do you like the most? Or which images, words, or symbols on the printed cards represent faith/leisure/well-being for you? Why? What actions identified on the cards are you using/ have you used in the past to support your wellbeing/faith/leisure?” (Kelly, 2019, p.4). In this part, participants were guided by researcher to talk about their opinions and related experience/ activities of leisure, wellbeing and faith. They were invited to provide some suggestions which were authentic and beneficial to their life. These suggestions would be shown to decision-makers at ICCS for policy development which could meet the needs of women of lived experience with homelessness.

### **Data analysis**

Mind maps were used to support analysis and organize data. Mind maps are innovative thinking tools that allow you to process information, combine large amounts of data into a visual diagram of relationships, and stimulate new ideas (Buzan, T, 2018). All coded data and relationships between codes are mapped out to paint the larger picture of the data associated with each research question or domain of the research. With all codes shown on the mind map, it was more convenient and clearer for researchers to summarize them into different categories and develop themes.

Thematic analysis was used to identify initial codes and common themes in both the original project and this thesis. According to Braun and Clarke (2012), it is a method “for systematically identifying, organizing, and offering insight into patterns of meaning (themes)

across a data set” (p.1). It contains six steps: familiarization, coding, generating themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, writing up (Caulfield, J, 2020). During the data analysis of the original project and this study, inquirers used an inductive (bottom up, data driven) approach (Braun & Clarke, 2012) such that codes and themes were developed from the original data themselves to match participant’s perspective closely.

As for the analysis process of the original project, firstly, we got to know all the data by listening to original recordings, reading through the transcript version and taking notes of impressions. At this stage, inquirers got familiar with all the data individually first. I reviewed the original text data repeatedly and got a deeper understanding of them. Then I filtered out the scope of content related to the research question and drew some areas that do not require special scrutiny (such as the narrator of the investigator and the chat not related to the question). For some places where I didn't understand the text data or the voice of the interviewees was vague, I listened to the original recording again to get a sense of what the participants really wanted to express. Stickers of women’s opinion towards leisure, well-being and faith collected from focus group were transcribed, clean verbatim into a word document for similar analysis.

After we finished the first step, we organized meetings where we could bring our individual notes and analyses together. A white board was used to record meeting notes and all records were photographed to be transferred to text version by me. For the coding part, we drew out all points related to leisure, well-being and faith from each transcript. At first, we spent three weeks in proposing a number of codes on the board. Subsequently, common points or patterns, and distinct or special experience expressed by participants were discussed. I made five mind maps, one for each participant’s interview, and three mind maps covering the three main domains for the focus group (8 maps total) to show all their opinions (see appendix). Their ideas

were presented as points under leisure, wellbeing and faith, and they were generalized under different areas of content such as nature, accessibility, etc. By comparing these mind maps together, we organized the common codes into three categories: leisure, well-being and faith. Similarly, I created three mind maps of the three categories and put all common codes on them.

According to the mind maps, we organized recurring and significant codes into initial themes. Similar types of codes were placed in the same category. For example, home, personal health, social ties and cooperation with others would be grouped into categories of community support, because they all played a supportive role in participants' life. We came up with four broad categories: community and connection; nature; optimism; intersections of leisure, faith and well-being. We provided sufficient and meaningful data from the previous interview under the summary of each theme as evidence of the trustworthiness of the research. If no data could be provided to support a proposed theme or sub-theme, the theme was discarded or refined. In the end, we drew up a report named *Using Design Thinking to Assess Needs and Develop Faith-based and Leisure Programming for Women of Lived Experience with Homelessness*. We also made a presentation to the staff of Samaritan House and showed them our report with recommendation to this institution.

I participated in the whole data analysis process of the research and worked on the report by collaborating with the originators of the project. This thesis is a follow-up based on the original data collected by the originators, Sharon Kelly and Garrett Stone, Professors at Vancouver Island University. As for the data analysis process of this thesis, I specifically focused on the topic of leisure needs of women experiencing homelessness and analyzed related data from and the photo voice and photo elicitation exercises. Leisure needs and experience would be the emphasis during the process of re-filtering and re-organizing data. Therefore, to

some extent, data analysis and themes of this thesis were different from the previous research process on participants' leisure, wellbeing and faith. Related content or themes of the previous project such as connection among leisure, well-being and faith would be retained if they were helpful to describe and explain participants' leisure needs. The same mind maps in the previous research would be the main tool to clearly organize and analyze the secondary data, and I would re-organize the previous mind maps and reserve codes which are relevant to the research questions of this thesis. The recommendation part of this study would also concentrate on promoting leisure participation among women of lived experience with homelessness and it would base on previous feedback provided by staff in Samaritan House.

### **Methodologic Integrity**

Strategies for ensuring methodological integrity proposed by Levitt et al. (2018) and Tracy (2010) were employed in this research. All researchers committed to maintain a respectful and rational attitude towards participants throughout the research process and aimed to increase the trustworthiness of the findings. The researcher primarily responsible for original data collection-built relationships of trust with participants in Samaritan House to create a comfortable environment to freely express themselves. In order to maintain a healthy physical and mental state for both investigators and participants, advanced training by Samaritan House staff and other agencies was taken by members of the research team to learn street culture and how to keep safe boundaries with participants. On the week before the data collection process, researchers got to know and became familiar with participants and their living conditions by spending time at Samaritan House.

Face to face photo voice interview, focus group and photo elicitation process, and archival data in this study allowed for 'triangulation' of the data, which means researching a

question by two or more approaches. This multi-approach enriched the data sources and made the findings more comprehensive and in-depth (Heal & Forbes, 2013). There were ten women of lived experience with homelessness involved in the study each with a different background, perspective, and trajectory, thus connecting with a variety of unique experiences, contributing to a bigger picture of homeless people's leisure needs. The manager of Samaritan House attended the presentation of the research report and provided her professional and experienced feedback so that inquirers could check and reflect on the utility of findings to respond to the research questions. Online information including the context of women experiencing homelessness in Nanaimo and solutions for this population were cited in this thesis to achieve the integrity of content.

In the data collection process, researchers aimed to speak as little as possible, to focus on hearing participants' voices and recording their perspectives. Interviewers asked participants questions related to research questions and did not provide comments or reactions that might influence the data collection. Interviewees were free to express their idea (including both positive and negative) and their words were transcribed and quoted, clean verbatim

As an investigator who did not participate in the data collection process but participated in the data analysis process, the author listened to the records many times to feel the emotion and real intentions expressed by participants. In addition, she asked the interviewers about their experiences and participants' reactions during the interview to getting familiar with the details of the data collection process. By repeatedly reviewing and enriching the memory of the recordings and transcript, the author tried to keep a stable perspective and consensus with interviewers to support the consistency of the research. In data analysis process, researchers sorted out interview codes which were relevant to the research goals, classified all codes into different categories, and

summarized themes from mind maps. The entire process stuck around the purpose of this research and prioritized participant's perspectives. Concrete detail such as direct quotes, excerpts and pictures from each participant were presented in the findings to add rigor.

## **Ethics**

Before the research was conducted, the research was approved by the Vancouver Island University Research Ethics Board. Furthermore, the research team discussed the research instruments/approaches, sites and timing of data collection, etc. with a senior staff member at Samaritan House to appropriately organize the research process and to ensure maximum, appropriate participation. Consent forms were distributed, read to and collected directly from participants at the time of recruitment, and at all contact points throughout the research process. Participant and Samaritan House staff had the opportunity to review and check study findings. .

As part of the REB application, a number of risks associated with participation in the research were identified and strategies to mitigate those risks were presented. For example, participants' response to research questions had the potential to expose their traumatic history or their engagement in "deviant" leisure and illegal activity, which could contribute participant's emotional distress, embarrassment, or loss of social status. Researchers planned to avoid these topics, stop the research if necessary, and provided information about mental support resources to protect participants from being harmed. Additionally, researchers were trained by Samaritan House staff and other agencies about how to create proper relationship with women of lived experience with homelessness, which helped the researcher to create a safe emotional and physical condition for both participants and researchers. Maintaining trust between researchers and participants was the priority, and only extreme cases were to be reported, such as revelations of the abuse of a child.

As for the undue influence, some residents at Samaritan House may have felt compelled to participate in the study because of the authority of the researchers and the conditions of the facilities provided by Samaritan House. Some women may have been in a situation where answers were given ‘under the influence’ of a substance and may hope to have some responses deleted from the research interpretation and findings. Under the circumstance, researchers reviewed every consent form for each approach of data collection. They confirmed that participants had been given prior consent and emphasized to participants that participation was not mandatory and would not jeopardize their right to live in Samaritan House. The researchers also conducted photo voice interviews and group discussions in the morning to avoid the time when the substances take effect and would not collect data from individuals who were still under the influence of the substance or who lacked appropriate mental capacity for themselves.

Participants would be encouraged to freely express their definition and understanding of leisure. Both verbal and written information provided by participants were treated as confidential to protect their privacy. In the data analysis process and the report presented to Samaritan House, all participant’s names were replaced with pseudonyms and indirectly identifiable information was omitted where practicable. When researchers conducted the interview and focus group process, some participants calmly talked about their negative experience such as being abused, illness and social intolerance, and they all kept a positive attitude toward self and life changes instead of dwelling on bad experiences.

## Chapter Four: Findings

Women of lived experience with homelessness defined leisure in a variety of ways. As far as participants were concerned, multiple types of leisure activities including both physical and mental activities represented their picture of leisure. However, the women also expressed they might face financial or time constraints which would keep them away from their preferred activities. The word “leisure” and its related activities became were described as luxurious and secondary for this population, while basic life necessities such as safety, money and food took priority in their life.

### Definition of Leisure

Women of lived experience with homelessness defined leisure in terms of activities, states of mind, and time. Leisure was perceived as a luxury for this population as they lack finances and time required to participate.

**Leisure was presented as recreational activities.** From the perspective of women of lived experience with homelessness, leisure was presented as diverse forms of activity, organized here into two categories: active activities and passive activities (The & Tey, 2019). Active activities mentioned by participants were hiking, yoga, cycling out on trails, traveling, walking, exercising, canoeing, camping, kayaking, volleyball, baseball, horse riding, and boating. Passive activities included listening or making music, meditation, watching TV, collecting natural items, getting out into nature, writing, art and crafts, and watching clouds and daisies. Through taking part in these activities, participants could feel positive emotions and affect such as happiness, calm, excitement.

Participants were also interested in recapturing their prior leisure pursuits. Sally, for example, said that “I would like to start more art again because I was going to start my own art-

based online business. I was going to sell my paintings and stuff. ... that was something that had really helped me throughout my life. I want to start planning instruments and stuff like that and making music. I think also just getting more active, like doing my yoga and working out more. Like actually watching what I'm eating." They might suspend their leisure habits for a long time or never try new leisure skills, but they were wanted to! They hoped to restart and relearn their past leisure activities as they considered their future.

**Leisure enhanced the state of mind.** Through taking part in the leisure process, women of lived experience with homelessness calmed down and cleared their minds. Participant Kal felt a sense of peace and solitude when she saw the sunset outdoors. For Participant Megan, meditating up by the daisies was a "bridge" to still her mind. In her words, "It's hard to pinpoint the thing. Meditation would help. But I'm not sure that the general population here can still their mind... I can do [that] anywhere. ... The self-hypnosis stuff I learned pretty quick." Participant Yen also viewed meditation as an activity that could connect with her mind: "So there would be like meditation, learning how to breathe that deep inside of being inside that survival mode." Yoga was also a part of calming recreation activities for Yen. She stated that "I've charged yoga before. And I slept for five hours after, so I can see like... activities that are calming, that make it breathe deep, because I tend to have very shallow breathing and I don't breathe very deeply..." Similarly, Sally regarded yoga as physical activity which could still her mind and release her tension. She said that "It helps stimulate in a different way, that you might have not realized before. I think it's just cause you have a calm with yourself and you realize a lot about like where you are tense and maybe where that tension is coming from and like how you can heal that within yourself and be more mindful of it too, so if you're standing a certain way making one

part tense then you can just keep on going and then working on that... It is very calming for your mind.”

**Leisure was perceived as time.** With limited time and money, leisure is a luxury for women of lived experience with homelessness. One participant wrote the following on one of the sticky notes in the focus group: “Because leisure is a luxury, I believe women in the shelter have a limited amount of [it]... basic survival takes priority.” Participants have to deal with basic life necessities first and then think about other things like leisure. In Megan’s words, “Only rich people get to have leisure time. ... I always thought it was something unrelated to me.” She continued, “Leisure time to me was after you did your work...it’s people, activity, energy...but you have to live.” As Kal said, “Leisure, I don’t even know what that is. I didn’t have time to even think of leisure. You couldn’t afford it.” In reality, leisure has become a thing that is not so easy to achieve. Women of lived experience with homelessness often do not have the time, money and related skills to participate in leisure activities. Leisure was largely regarded as a reward after basic life necessities were satisfied and work was done.

### **Leisure Needs**

Leisure needs always seem to come after physiological needs and safety needs are met for women of lived experience with homelessness. Leisure was regarded as a reward and an additional factor of life, which might be ignored or difficult to achieve for this population in daily life. However, when they have the opportunity to participate in leisure, these women might experience intolerant judgement and disparity by others. They expressed a need to be respected and be involved by society generally and when doing leisure activity or moving through leisure spaces. Leisure was a way to promote their wellbeing and faith. Through taking part in different

leisure activities, women of living experience with homelessness could satisfy their unique desires.

**Leisure needs were addressed after basic needs were satisfied.** Women of lived experience with homelessness often encounter(ed) time poverty, busy doing their work, such as mowing their lawn, traveling to access services, paying their bills and maintaining facilities, whether at their own home in the past or in Samaritan House in the present. Safety, accommodation, food and water were needs which they concerned themselves with and tried to satisfy first. These needs were temporarily satisfied in Samaritan House, where they also enhanced their personal skill to “prevent it (the condition of living with most basic needs unmet) from happening again” and to gain more security for themselves. While physiological needs and safety needs were regarded as the most important and urgent needs in their life, leisure was not viewed as an essential life factor for them. In the opinion of one participant in the focus group, “Leisure is something I can’t afford, the basic necessities are more important to me than my leisure... that comes after you’ve obtained your goals. ... that comes after I’ve obtained my stability and how to get all my ducks in a row. Leisure is happening when you’re trying to achieve something, something that is almost a reward.” Interviewee Megan envisioned a leisure future when she might be “one of the trucks parked, [which] had a kayak on top”. However, she mainly focused on satisfying her basic life needs in part because of high barriers to leisure, including expensive fees for admission to preferred leisure facilities, such as campgrounds, the port theater, etc. and transportation to and from those activities. So, she largely gave up her ideal leisure vision, the truck with a kayak on top.

**Inclusion in the community and humane treatment were central leisure needs.**

*Festival celebration and the sense of community.* Festivals, especially Canada day, were considered an important opportunity for leisure participation for women of lived experience with homelessness. For them, the holiday celebration was an opportunity to connect with members of the society as well as the city and even the country. For their age, the festival celebration was a very special and ceremonial thing containing a diversity of activities and festive atmosphere, so they cared about the festival and thought it was very significant. However, for a variety of reasons including the change of behavior patterns of younger people and technology development, participants felt that peoples' awareness of and participation in the festival gradually weakened, and the atmosphere of celebrating on the streets was reduced. As Megan noted, "There is not a single Canadian flag on the buildings, even the masthead of the restaurant had no Canadian flag. And what I noticed is the lack of city involvement in Canada. No fireworks. ... And a lot of people saying there's no fireworks. The people were there to celebrate, but the community didn't, the business community, of Nanaimo itself." Kal thought Canada day was the festival for family: "It was the most packed I've ever seen it because we did it for family. It's very geared to the family." She mentioned that Canada day was a family-oriented festival, but this festival was not that happy for her as one who was disconnected from her family. Her experience of watching other family gathering in Canada day triggered her memory of the time with her family; but she had lost her husband in 2017 and her daughter didn't stay with her most of the time, which meant that she could only spend the time on Canada day alone. Changes in the patterns and activities offered at these types of festivals or celebrations have discouraged participation for these women. They have a leisure need to participate in these

festivals, and they hope that the festival celebration pattern could fit their age needs and authentically engage them.

*Being respected and respecting others in leisure involvements.* During the process of leisure activity or programs, being treated equally without intolerant judgment was a mental and social need for women of living experience with homelessness. It was generally expressed that people should not judge others (including women of lived experience with homelessness) for whoever they are and what kinds of leisure activities they are involved in. Megan was addicted to cigarettes and used them to get a good night's sleep because of her bad hip at night. Before staying in Samaritan House, she felt judged harshly by others because of her cigarette addiction. She worried that people only judged the behavior of smoking in a negative way but ignored the real reason for her smoking – pain relief. She said: “Other than that, I could care less if I had to do nothing. But you have to learn not to be judgmental. And on both sides of these issues down there.” She also witnessed a disparity in treatment when taking pictures at a working pier: “A man sleeping on that bench. And nobody was bothering them, but a very well-dressed couple came by with suitcases and she screamed her head off. She ran right to the harbor to have him removed. He had no bags, no litter around. No disruption at all. But she couldn't allow him to be there. Even though she wasn't staying there. She screamed all the way to the office. He had to be gone.” Participants sometimes encountered unfair judgement and disparity by others because of their status and didn't feel comfortable with this critique from society. Some people might not know this population well and harbor prejudices or intolerant judgements: “They only see tent city. He's not made anything... you wouldn't even know he was there. It was still offensive to her.” Accepting was a big thing for Megan when she talked about this experience. She had a strong ethic and mentioned that people with any status, religion, or culture should be respected

and treated well. With tolerance and concession, she chose to get used to this unfair experience: “Oh come now, get over yourself, you’re not that important in the general scheme of things.

That’s how I look at it and it’s been hard, but that’s how it’s been.” Another participant Sam also presented her idea of respect to both self and others: “I think it is a mixture of being able to be real with yourself, being courageous and also not judging others. The other big thing is showing everyone love and care and being a humanitarian cause that’s how I am, just loving everyone.” This was also an aspect of well-being of Sam's live. She believed that sending as much love as she could to someone hurting themselves on their path would make a difference, rather than judging or doing nothing.

### **Leisure as a Tool to Respond to Social-Psychological Needs**

Taking part in leisure activities helped address many social-psychological needs. Yen used to be involved in various leisure activities and perceived how this participation related to her personal development: “Hiking... it helps me in many ways. It helps me focus on my own goals in life and what I’d like to have or where I’m at. ... I’ve done really good readings for other people, is just building up the confidence. ... I’ve charged yoga before. And I slept for five hours after so I can see like, like really activities that are calming, that make it breathe deep...meditation ... And biking, like riding a bike makes you breathe that deep. I’ve never breathed so deep in my life until I rode a bike. ... just like a lot of nature.” For Yen, meditation and biking made her breath deep inside and feel the inner body; yoga enabled her to sleep better and feel calm from various stress and gain the sense of safety; etc. For others, reading could strengthen self-confidence and garner respect from others; hiking could help them concentrate on life goals and fulfill the self-actualization needs. Various leisure activities contributed to the fulfillment of a hierarchy of needs proposed by Maslow: monitoring physiological state (Maslow

- physiological), calming (Maslow - safety), building confidence (Maslow - esteem), and achieving goals (Maslow – self-actualization). As Sally communicated, “meditation it helped me grow through a lot of things which I think is a lot about expansion and learning about yourself and being able to be courageous with yourself to not block out those things that have maybe not been so favorable that have happened in your life and just coming to terms with it and learning from it and not taking it personally anymore and just being able to help other people who went through the same things that you did.” Moreover, she claimed that both meditation and yoga supported her gratefulness. From Megan’s perspective, well-being is when people have good music that is accessible to every sector of the community. She believed “classical music opens pathways in your brain...the same as math and science.” She used to be sent to the children’s Symphony on her birthday every year and saw all the rock concerts, which made her feel appreciation to her dad. The experience of attending concerts helped her gain an understanding of the music of different styles and countries. For now, she misses music as a huge part of her life as well as a factor supporting her well-being and leisure. As for Kal, she similarly felt a sense of happiness and togetherness when enjoying music. As she said, “Music is very important to me and affects my moods. ... And it draws people together. And it’s free in it. I have never seen so many happy, that all age groups were there. ... that was leisure. That’s fun.” Music generally played a positive and effective role for women of lived experience with homelessness. Presented as a low-cost leisure need in the past, music performance was easily accessed in street parks or port theaters for women of living experience with homelessness, and their understanding of music, joyfulness and cross-age communication as well as well-being could be promoted in the free, public music offerings.

## **The Connection Between Leisure, Nature, and Wellbeing**

Compared to leisure facilities with high admission fee such as port theatre and art gallery, nature was relatively more accessible with lower economic barriers for women experiencing homelessness. Nature played an important and mostly positive role in leisure life for women of lived experience with homelessness. That being said, it is important to note they might face some challenges when spending leisure time in outdoor environments and green spaces. For example, one participant had witnessed a man who sat on the bench got chased off by a passerby for no reason, which left this participant an impression of being disrespected by society members in public outdoor spaces. Each participant had their own way of participating in outdoor leisure as noted by one participant who said: “I think we all have our own nature.” Nature was presented as a space for participants to calm their mind as well as to de-stress and get away from participants, themselves and the struggles of life. Nature allowed women to play, create, and express artistic abilities.

**Nature was a medium to deliver the sense of calm and happiness to women of lived experience with homelessness.** As in the photo taken by Protection Island, Mel felt calm when she sat on the bench and looked at the view: “It’s nice to be calm, quiet when looking, that’s perfectly fine. That’s not going to interfere with being away. ... And you just relaxed, everybody relaxes.”



Figure 6: Protection Island. Retrieved from <https://www.protectionisland.ca>

When she talked about the photo of daisy, she mentioned that “This is something that’s at the house that I could take that wouldn’t be identifiable with Samaritan. But it’s the daisies up front. It’s soothing. Happy. Daisies are happy”. Observing those little daisies helped women of lived experience with homelessness change their state of mind.



Figure 7: Daises photographed by Lauren McConachie on Unsplash

According to Sally, she captured the picture as serenity, which enabled her to reflect her inner heart and feel happy:

This photo means beauty and serenity for me. Every time I see it, it just makes me feel calm. I end up seeing a lot of life and just, I don’t every time I look at it just makes me super happy. It makes me feel warm on the inside. I think it’s a lot of internal reflection for myself.



Figure 8: Picture “The winds of change” taken by Sally

**Nature was a vehicle to de-stress and get away.** Donna experienced a traumatic marriage with financial, physical and emotional abuse, and she got divorced and started believing in God to build herself up. When she talked about her leisure time, watching clouds, she said that “Oh, when I first looked at it, I saw, I saw a puppy. Like, for me, when I want de-stress, and then reflect, then I’ll sit down, and I normally look at the sky and the clouds... You know I was thankful for just, just being able to see the clouds, you know, and, and that really relaxes me.” Imagining clouds of different shapes and the calm feeling of watching the sky released her traumatic stress and helped her stay away from those desperate experiences.



Figure 9: Shapes in Cloud. Photo by Dallas Reedy on Unsplash

Mel preferred staying away from crowded environments and crowded mind. She liked staying in nature to settle down. In her word, “That’s Newcastle... a place where we can go...if we like to be away, that’s totally different than everything. Away, away from yourself....out of your head”.

**Nature was ever-changing and women of lived experience with homelessness could capture different things or feelings each time they were in nature.** Kal talked about her experience of gathering natural items, and how every time she looked, she would find something new: “It’s like a screen in the ocean... like moving water. The scene always changes, things

always change down under. ... It's always interesting to just never know what you're going to find." This outdoor activity allowed Kal to experience a different view every time, even if she traveled to the same place. It gave her more chances to use her imagination and ability to design natural crafts.

Yen cherished each opportunity to feel the nature and the change of the nature. And relatively speaking, nature taught her that life and herself were ever-changing every day. She claimed that "Children now a days, sit in front of TVs. They don't know the difference of how quickly nature well change." The changed lifestyle of the youth with more technical products was not wellness of life for her, and she chose to get close to nature each morning by participating in different physical activities such as hiking and riding to start her new day. Yen captured an image and explained how her 'bathing' in nature allowed her to heal according to her cultural traditions:

The Elder was teaching me like I was going through a lot of trauma issues. And she said, I want you to bath in the river, not for four days but eight. And then come back after the eight days and let me know. Well, those rocks were dry, right like for say, two, three days, next thing you see a little trickle. And then by the eighth day, like you know, it's rushing down here, up to here to get across to go back and so within eight days that water trickled to, you know, going up to your ankle, up to your shin, the next you know you're really breaking your hands up to get cross with, you know, and scratching your knees and stuff. Well, that's our nature too. That's how fast we change, you know, or that's how fast I change, but I go catch up to that to recognize because it changes every day. And as a child, we learned that as children because our playground changed every day, the teachings of anybody, any child that plays in nature, their playground changes every day.

So, it's not just about being First Nation. It's just that's my culture.



Figure 10: Picture “Morning bath” taken by Yen

**Nature was a playground for participants where they could create games and design arts.** When Kal talked about the picture taken by Gordon Bay, she expressed her habit of imaging natural items as having different meanings: “I kind of find that exciting on the seaside. I started a collection of small pieces of driftwood this year cause when I used to go to Newcastle. It always seems to be a game. ... A driftwood, one I found was like a finger, like this big, and I painted the fingernail on it.” Yen also have the same interest to create art out of natural items: “I found a willow tree that was kind of dried out, so I just grabbed it and made it a dream catcher.” They both loved having fun in the process of collecting, re-designing and gaining natural items for free, as part of their leisure.

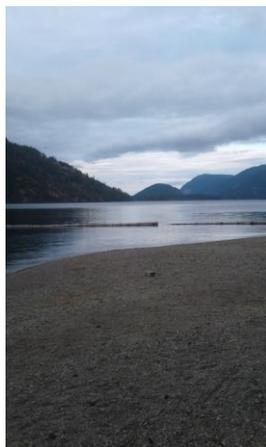


Figure 11: Picture captured by Yen about “Observed nature and collect nature items”

Painting natural scenery was another leisure form proposed by women of lived experience with homelessness. As Sam said, “That’s umm Protection (Island). I used to paint and things that I would want to paint....” Those daisies planted in the front of Samaritan House also inspired her idea of painting: “I’d like to paint that. That’s something that’s here that I like to sit out front.”

### **Leisure Helped Women Satisfy Spiritual Needs**

Recreation activities are one way that participants connected themselves to spirituality. They perceived a positive inner feeling in the leisure activity process. Yen has a variety of leisure activities, many of which seemed to support her spirituality. As she said, “that’s a physical recreational activity tied in with my spirituality and connected to my wellness. ... They all blend into one like, recreation equals spirituality, like that’s the whole reason for the recreation is to meet my spiritual needs.” As one participant mentioned in the photo elicitation group, “massage is faith and leisure as well. You’re relaxing, you can go to mind and body, spirit and faith and you can go into your leisure. Anything that relaxes you and your mind and takes off in a different direction, put things into perspective, or figure something out, so it could be.” For these participants, leisure activities are considered a bridge to support spiritual needs, and involvement in different leisure activities enabled them to satisfy those needs.

Participant Sally used to suffer from some negative experiences but now she is mainly focused on the present moment and trying to stay well mentally. In her words, “Meditative. Just being able to breathe and take in your spirit. When you breathe in spirit and it just connects you more to like the energy around you also because I am very open to that. ... I want to feed my soul as healthy as it can be instead of putting nasty stuff in there. Umm and just creating a more mindful lifestyle. ... And reconnecting with my spirituality and starting to do all my candle

rituals like I used to a just harness the energy from the earth inside of me and just know I'm here for a reason, I have a purpose and just keep following that." Sally would like to start a new life with a positive attitude with a scheduled routine including getting up early in the morning, having breakfast, journaling, talking to friends, keeping in touch with them, yoga, meditating, reading, and reminding herself that she was worthy and that she could get through anything life. Leisure activities like yoga and meditation could connect Sally with her spirituality and support her getting out of the negativity which tried to pull her back. In her view, these activities were positive and contributed to personal and spiritual development.

### **Constraints to Leisure Activities**

Structural constraints were the most common constraints to leisure participation for women of lived experience with homelessness. Lack of finances; unaffordable cost of leisure facilities, transportation and equipment; fewer free leisure performances; and limited financially supported programs were barriers to taking part in leisure activities. Public space was gradually replaced by commercial buildings and apartments, and leisure facilities were presented as fancy and expensive places with price inflation. Free or low-priced leisure opportunities such as street music performances that had been accessible and popular years before, were not as available for the low-income population now. Moreover, this population spent most of their time satisfying their basic necessities and safety needs, while spare time for leisure programs was unavailable. Some participants of this study were more than 50 years old and encountered some physical problems such as hip pain. Aging, older women of lived experience with homelessness might have decreased mobility and bodily functioning compared to their younger counterparts and, therefore, may be limited to low-intensity leisure activities.

**Financial constraints to leisure participation.** A lack of financial support was one of the most commonly reported constraints to leisure participation and well-being. Due to the shortage of funds, participants' leisure activities decreased considerably now, compared to the past. With the increase in life pressure, participation in leisure activities also decreased. Women also did not have easy access to activities of the past: “back when I have lived in an apartment complex, there was a lot of single mothers and they would go to Newcastle for their vacation. Three or four days and it was \$2 on the ferry. I could rent a camping spot...two or three go together, carry everything over and have a vacation. These are all things that have changed over the last decade. And you’re talking \$30 or \$40 just to get over there. When it used to be \$2.” Comparing the past and the present, although they all go to the same place and use the same means of transportation, the cost has greatly increased (by more than ten times), and the accessibility of transportation for them has decreased. Price inflation makes it more difficult for them to afford holidays and outings, and they are no longer free to go wherever they once easily went. As Participant Yen suggested, recreation or leisure activity used to be a comfort or pleasure. She spent a lot of time on her interested leisure activities before her finances completely changed. In her word, “it’s a lack of finances that prevents me from going canoeing, kayaking, and, you know, playing volleyball, or even having a team to play volleyball.” Another participant used to spend a lot of time canoeing and kayaking but now describes money as a ‘blank wall’ that restrains the accessibility of these activities. The rising cost of leisure activities and their vulnerable financial conditions become barriers for those women.

**Financial constraints to leisure supplies, equipment, and spaces.** The poor economic conditions experienced by these women not only decreased the frequency of leisure activities but also reduced access to supplies, equipment, and facilities that enabled their leisure participation.

Some women desired access to some recreational facilities like theaters or art galleries but could not fulfill these desires. For example, when Mel was asked about what her picture of the Port Theatre symbolized for her, she said: “Inaccessible...It’s frustrating. That’s not accessible to everybody at some level. When it’s government-funded and volunteer.” There used to be many free concerts in the park, but now there are fewer. Art galleries are expensive to get into especially in Vancouver, whereas it had cost only \$1 to enter the Vancouver Art Gallery in the past. Art has gradually become a formal, noble thing that needs to be displayed in the building, and some people have been pulled further away from art. For many participants, enjoying music, art and the kind of stuff they are interested in has become increasingly difficult. Moreover, one participant felt that the higher threshold for art would keep children from recognizing and appreciated art today: “And it’s like when kids say I don’t like that, but they don’t know that.”

**Limited financially supported leisure programs.** There is a LEAP program provided by the City of Nanaimo which provides free or discounted admissions to leisure classes for people in financial need. However, people certified by this program still need to pay some tuition for joining the leisure courses, and choices of leisure courses are limited for women of lived experience with homelessness. Megan wanted to do yoga or Tai Chi to enjoy the stillness of these activities, and she claimed that “LEAP covers a portion, you still got pay. ... You still have to pay the tuition. And, because there are classes, they think some of the girls like the pottery, or the art classes where it’s a little more directed but they still have the cost. I think the city could allow so many seats for a place like this. Male or female.” A member in the focus group showed that: “Perhaps we could have some greater access for that because again they cost money. And you just don’t have the extra. ... but what you do with the LEAP card, it does get you in half of it. So, you have to pay like a little bit. ... you can scan like 50 something scans or whatever. And

then they'll refresh it." The LEAP program did release part of the financial pressure of doing leisure activities, but the rest of the cost was still a problem for women of lived experience with homelessness.

**Transportation constraints.** Transportation was a barrier for women of lived experience with homelessness due to cost, time, and planning required to get from one place to another. With limited finances, transportation fees became unaffordable for this population. As Kelly worried, "There's still needed, you know, you still needed transportation. You still needed to get there. It was just, you still had to do a lot of planning for a lot of the well-being to be healthy, fitness-wise...a lot of people aren't self-motivated... It went down to [those who had] the money and the have's and have nots." Moreover, the choice of transportation limited their range of leisure participation. Residents who lived in Samaritan House mainly went outside on foot or by bus, so they could only go to the place nearby the bus station, which may have prevented them from going to other cities or any place without accessible public transportation.

**Public space constraints.** As a place for leisure activities, space is a significant factor for women of lived experience with homelessness to access leisure opportunities. Public places intended for leisure activities and the well-being in the city are decreasing as they are replaced by business or residential uses. Kal felt disappointed when public space was sold, and things gradually boiled down to money. In her words, "That's just money because our green spaces are being bought now by, you know, contractors and builders, when before it was all said that this is green space, and now the bigger dollar comes along, and it's all now for sale." With low incomes, free public places were one of the few spaces for women of lived experience with homelessness to take part in leisure activities such as enjoying the sunset or bathing in nature.

But now, the privatization of public space decreased the range of activities the accessibility of public space for this population.

**Time constraints.** As noted above, spare time for leisure participation was a luxury for women of lived experience with homelessness. Samaritan House residents were occupied with their own job, maintenance for facilities and assistance for staff in the House. As most participants showed, they would participate in leisure activities as a reward after all basic necessities were done. After all work is done, they might have little or no time for their preferred leisure activities.

**Age Constraints.** With the degeneration of body functions, women of lived experience with homelessness might choose certain leisure activities which met their physical condition. Most participants in this study were over 50 years old. Participants might accept leisure activities with lower difficulty and intensity such as yoga: “It was gentle like the yoga was very gentle and you’re stretching you’re not like you know doing aerobics where you’re jarring. It’s just nice slow movements.” They also admitted that there was a generation gap between themselves and the younger generation, and they had slower movements and a quieter speaking mode than the young. As one participant mentioned in the focus group, “Our generation, we kept our mouths quiet more, and we’re more reserved, and we’re not speaking out and quite as aggressive as the new, the younger ones that are that age group.”

### **The Role of Samaritan House and Related Organizations for Women of Lived Experience**

Participants noted that well-being and leisure were both more accessible in the time and space provided by Samaritan House: “Outside space too...I mean, watching Jane and her garden, you can see that she’s at peace. She had an outdoor space and maybe had a few yoga mats or just things to push us to do some of the activities. Something that gave us the ability to try something

new and the materials were there to use.” Although the space in the house that could be used by women was limited, they would take delight in using space and expect more available space in the future. The house also provides counselor opportunities for experience sharing to assist women in protecting themselves and enriching their life.

As a form of supportive housing, Samaritan House makes it accessible for women to feel good in their life with safe space and harmonious atmosphere: "It made me feel good, the music and stuff, and maybe it would trigger memories of something else to other people. I'm learning just as much here...and started writing things down things, our emotions." Yen claimed that she got well treated after staying in Samaritan House: "But when I got here, people were so caring and so kind...It can really be a world in your own world here...That was really the first time in my life that I've actually had my security safety needs to be met in my life...Now I can get born again and start my spirituality again because I haven't done that." She tried to be a good resident in Samaritan House and help with the maintenance of the house, laundry and things the staff needed. As she said, "It was such a nice relief to have these few things taken off me so I could reassess where I want to be, and so I really was actively looking every day." More things to do and the sense of community in Samaritan House enrich her life and enable Yen to take good care of her physical hygiene needs and safety needs.

Accessibility to leisure facilities or activities is a basic factor contributing to opportunities for women of lived experience with homelessness to satisfy their leisure needs. To enhance the accessibility of leisure programs, the City of Nanaimo presented the LEAP program which provides free or discounted leisure activities admissions for this and other low-income populations. Samaritan House also provides free bus passes for their residents to encourage them to get out and be mobile individually or as a group.



## **Chapter Five: Discussion**

The purpose of this study is to explore the leisure needs and experience of women of lived experience with homelessness, to make suggestions to relevant institutions to promote leisure participation and well-being for this population. This chapter will summarize and integrate findings with literature on leisure needs, homelessness, and wellbeing. In line with design thinking principles, validated and authentic recommendations will be presented as voiced by participants in the study. Limitations and suggestions for future research are also included.

### **Benefits of Leisure**

Leisure participation was generally considered beneficial for women experiencing homelessness as it promotes their mental health, well-being and faith needs (McNaughton & Sanders, 2007; Raphael-Greenfield & Gutman, 2015, Javaherian-Dysinger et al., 2016; Weybright et al., 2015, 2016). Therapeutic recreation interventions such as yoga and meditation provided opportunities for controlling their mind (Snethen, McCormick, & Van Puymbroeck, 2012) and supported their confidence and ability to take good care of themselves and get out of negativity with a scheduled daily plan (Knestaut et al., 2010; Kunstler, 1991, 1992; Tryssenaar et al., 1999). Specific leisure activities, particularly low impact and nature-based activities could make a difference in various aspects these women's lives. Participants chose certain leisure activities according to their needs and the function of the activity.

### **Leisure, Stress, and Coping**

As noted in prior literature, the present status for the homeless population was stressful, particularly for women (Banyard & Graham-Bermann, 1995; Fogel, 1997; Thrasher & Mowbray, 1995), and women who are homeless face multiple kinds of stress simultaneously (Klitzing, 2003). For example, insomnia, aging, and negative experience such as divorce, being abused and

the loss of family members increased their stress and anxiety. Both time poverty and low economic status were major barriers for women experiencing homelessness to get involved in leisure and created instability and stress in these women's lives as well (Ghosh, 2016).

Kleiber et al. (2002) pointed out that leisure can be seen as a distraction to cope with daily stress and to relieve long-term negative life experiences. "Leisure palliative coping", one of the three leisure coping strategies proposed by Iwasaki and Mannell (2000) indicates that leisure enables people to escape stress, get refreshed and have a better mood to deal with problems. Appropriate leisure coping strategies could produce positive outcomes such as respite and relief from a variety of stress (Klitzing, 2004), which facilitates well-being of physical health and mental health of women experiencing homelessness (Iwasaki, 2003). Active leisure activities such as yoga and passive leisure form such as being out in nature could get one away from stress and still their mind (Bowling, 2000; Klitzing, 2003). Participants engaged in certain leisure activities like meditation as diversionary activities (Klitzing, 2004) which helped them escape from their present stressful situations (Iso-Ahola, 1982). They enhanced their state of mind and calmed down during their freely chosen intrinsic leisure participation (Neulinger, 1974).

### **Respect as a Central Need in Leisure and Life**

According to Maslow's (1989) hierarchy, esteem needs refer to individuals "need or desire for a stable, firmly based, (usually) high evaluation of themselves, for self-respect, or self-esteem, and for the esteem of others" (p.27). All human beings have esteem needs with a few pathological exceptions. The satisfaction of the esteem needs was beneficial for participants to build up confidence, identify their inner worth, feel encouragement, and feel both included in and contributory to society. On the contrary, obstruction of these needs could give rise to a sense

of self-abasement, loneliness, and marginalization as was the case for women in this study (Maslow, 1989).

Although women of lived experience with homelessness received social assistance from government and related institutions, they still experienced isolation and loneliness (Khosla, 2008) associated with stigmatization and discrimination by others in broader society (Baker Collins, 2005). For example, "intolerant judgment" was emphasized by participants when talking about their leisure experience in public spaces. The homeless population were looked down upon by other society members frequently, even as they just sat on a bench on the seaside. They have become used to being judged harshly and feeling they cannot take action to change others' bigotry or feel respected. Nature, as an easily accessible leisure space, was positive for creating and engaging in leisure opportunities, but it could be still problematic. People who are homeless might be disrespected by other users in outdoor spaces, might be victimized in these spaces, or simply may not enjoy these spaces, which inevitably become places where shelter, not leisure, is pursued. Inclusive leisure may play a role in creating a sense of belonging, breaking down stereotypes, and creating respectful relationships between people who are homeless and other members of the community (Klitzing, 2004).

Moreover, when women experiencing homelessness participate in what some might call "deviant" leisure, they tend to feel the criticism of others more intensely, which might further hurt their self-esteem. Leisure activities are generally viewed to be positive and rewarding in mainstream academia and society, reflecting people's non-obligatory and intrinsic choices in free time. When activities diverge from the mainstream they are often described as deviant, taboo, abnormal, etc. (e.g., illicit drug use, vampirism, or BDSM). In the participants' opinion, the public often considers deviant leisure is unethical, and they tend to walk away from the people

who have deviant leisure habits or engage in 'abnormal' behaviors in leisure spaces. Some scholars argue that leisure activities should not necessarily be limited by shifting moral codes (Rojek, 1999; Gunn & Caissie, 2006), and deviant leisure has thus drawn increasing attention. According to Stebbins Rojek and Sullivan (2006), deviating leisure is a prerequisite for social change and is not always morally wrong because it can have positive outcomes, for example, by transferring traumatic experience to positive life attitudes. Megan was addicted to cigarettes, but it was helpful for a night of good sleep because of her bad hip at night. Don used to be addicted to alcohol, heroin and cocaine because of her addicted ex-husband, but she soon got divorced, got rehabilitation from drugs and started her new life. In some cases, the outcome justified the activity. Some participants feel compelled to participate in deviant leisure for personal reasons, but they were not authentically fond of these activities. To some extent, these kinds of deviant or low stimulus leisure helped them to temporarily improve their quality of life or dull the pain of life. Deviant leisure is often associated with "crime", "disruption of social order", and "morality" (Williams & Walker, 2006), but the way that these participants exhibit deviant leisure is often to facilitate their own lives and not to affect others. Some deviant leisure is negative for their lives, but it is this negative influence that makes them more motivated to change their current status and strive for a better life. People could seek a better understanding of the life of women who are homeless and the reason why they attend to deviant leisure rather than judge them. Everyone, including women of lived experience with homelessness, has their own anguish and understanding them and being kind to them is often an encouragement to progress.

In addition to the perceived disrespect experienced by participants associated with their identity and activities, women of lived experience with homelessness were not considered and included in the urban leisure planning. Conflict and oppression in leisure spaces and places (e.g.,

city squares, urban parks, and sport and cultural facilities) reflected inadequate consideration of esteem needs of women experiencing homelessness. Fewer available leisure spaces and places in urban and suburban areas were constraints to leisure participation, which not only limited public space but increased the likelihood of social exclusion towards women experiencing homelessness in the remaining space. As noted by participants in this research, public space for leisure participation in urban areas has gradually been evaluated for its economic potential rather than the potential to promote citizen's life quality (Logan & Molotch, 1987), and thus become a commodity to be sold and or rented to those with sufficient economic resources (Lloyd & Auld, 2003). Public leisure places have increasingly been rebuilt into *private* leisure facilities and related business spaces such as sports stadiums (Bale, 1993), resorts and shopping centers (Hawkins & Gibson, 1994), and amusement parks and theatres (Zukin, 1995; Cramer, 2000). The privatization and commercialization of public space attracts people with a comfortable economic condition to participate in the redeveloped leisure spaces marked by expensive admissions, but they exclude low-income people such as the homeless population from participating in the leisure experience, which was deemed as "annoying, 'anti-social', or simply involves people congregating or 'hanging around'" (Crane, 2000, p. 108).

With the alleged goal of maintaining safety, citizens, owners of private spaces and governments often exclude people who are homeless from public places. For example, in Victoria, the provincial capital of BC as well as a famous garden city, the unsheltered people experiencing homelessness are typically driven from public spaces, like Centennial Square, by residents and government officials (Kines, 2020). According to Kines, housing made for low-income people was seriously inadequate, and the homeless people were facing double predicament – they could not afford expensive housing while they were simultaneously

prohibited from staying in public green space, which left no sleeping spaces need for survival. Similarly, in downtown Nanaimo, the tent city containing 300 homeless people standing for the supportive housing policy was disbanded by the Supreme Court of British Columbia (Nanaimo News Staff, 2018). Moreover, 77% of parks in Nanaimo have restrictive rules that forbid overnight camping, and members of the homeless population are turned away from these public spaces several times in a night (Schisler, 2019; Wilson, 2020). Obviously, the homeless population was not able to be treated understandingly in terms of public space, and they were not accepted and involved properly by either fellow citizens or government.

Improving self-esteem was one of the most important reasons for providing leisure opportunities to people experiencing homelessness in shelters (Dawson and Harrington, 1996). Each individual in society, including women of lived experience with homelessness, has a value and unique experiences, and everyone deserves to be respected and treated equally. Inequality and exclusion should not be permitted to anyone because of their unique, and sometimes 'deviant' experience (Young, 1990). Public spaces in the urban area should embrace differences in social and economic terms including people with different cultures and the diverse lifestyles (Iveson, 1998). These places enable people, no matter their economic class, to feel safe and accepted; i.e., "judgment free spaces" (Trussell & Mair, 2010, p.529) welcoming all people to participate in leisure. By positively promoting cultural inclusion and mutual respect in public space, women experiencing homelessness would be treated with respect instead of unreasonable discrimination, thus satisfying their need for esteem.

### **Structural Constraints: Leisure, Time poverty and Economic Poverty**

According to core definitions of leisure, leisure typically occurs during one's spare time with a high level of perceived freedom (Smigel, 1963; Kaplan, 1960; Neulinger, 1974), which means

that people should be able to satisfy the conditions for engaging in their preferred leisure forms such as having time, money, transportation and tools needed. If one's work time overwhelms their spare time or if one's work provides inadequate finances to support leisure programs, they would not be able to freely participate in leisure activities of their choice.

In this study, structural constraints (Crawford et al., 1991) including time poverty and financial poverty were the greatest barriers between participants' preference and leisure participation. For example, some participants used to freely take part in various leisure activities in the past, but they rarely participate in leisure in the present because of lack of finances. Leisure activities, particularly those requiring admission fees were unaffordable and inaccessible for them, and leisure was perceived as a luxury for this population. "A hierarchy of social privilege" proposed by Crawford et al. (1991, p.315) describes the intensity of structural constraints that distinguish between upper and lower classes. From the participants' perspective, rich people were considered the population with the most access to leisure activities because they had both wealth and time. Women of lived experience hoped to transcend that wealth gap and desired to be involved more frequently in leisure activities and in a greater range of leisure activities (Jackson, 1989; Kay & Jackson, 1990). Considering that women, particularly those who are single or divorced, were more likely to be underpaid and underemployed than men (Roll et al., 1999), it is clear that the women in this study face an unfair disadvantage.

**Time poverty is connected to economic poverty.** Time poverty signifies a shortage of time and an excess of things to do, including leisure activities (Ghosh, 2016), and it might be correlated with an individual's physical health, mental health, and productivity (Giurge et al., 2020). Most studies focus on time poverty of the middle- or upper- class and working parents (Ezzedeen & Zikic, 2017; Harvey & Mukhopadhyay, 2007; Zilanawala, 2016) while time

pressures experienced by lower income individuals, including those who are homeless, are ignored. This may be due to the inaccurate assumption that people who are homeless are underemployed and therefore rich in time. However, in order to sustain basic consumption needs, women of lived experience with homelessness dually engage in paid work for long hours with comparatively low salary and have to spend their unpaid labor satisfying essential needs such as food, housing, and transportation (Elson, 1995; Ghosh, 2016; Fraenkel, 2020). Lack of finances led to more effort and time spent satisfying personal requirements because women experiencing homelessness cannot afford the expensive fees occasionally paid to service providers and have to accomplish unpaid labors such as landscaping, cleaning living spaces, and cooking without appropriate tools or assistance. This excess time spent on basic necessities and personal requirements restricted and occupied their leisure time and opportunity, which led to leisure time poverty for this population.

Government and related homeless service providers often neglect the influence of time poverty of low-income individuals and families (Ghosh, 2016); instead, financial constraints to leisure activities have been the focus. Furthermore, policies or authoritative government action may actually increase inconvenience and time pressure for the homeless population (Ghosh, 2016). For example, the tent city in downtown Nanaimo used to bring groups of people who are homeless together, allowing them to communicate with each other and access resources in a centralized manner. The forcible demolition of the tent city pushed these people further away from the city center, which increased their unpaid time to get social and economic resources; i.e., time spent walking to the market, food banks or to chat with people with a similar life condition (Nanaimo News Staff, 2018).

Fraenkel (1994, 2011) proposed a theory of human temporality focusing on how couples could improve their relationships by adjusting conflicting temporal patterns. This theory has been applied to the homeless population, especially homeless persons who are at odds with family or society at large, or who experience enhanced time pressure. There were four elements of temporality which met the circumstances of women of lived experience with homelessness: time perspective (past/present/future), time allocation (time divided into different life activities), time orientation (limited calendar linked to the sense of anxiety and unstable), and rhythms (frequent time patterns changing). Participants in the present study indicated that future leisure plans connected to well-being and faith might put their negative experience in the past and help them become independent from the present status of homelessness (time perspective). They also explained how scheduling and receiving support for daily paid and unpaid work time was needed (time allocation). Due to the flexible shelter system with a “no limit” staying time provided by Martha’s place of Samaritan house (Island Crisis Care Society, 2019), women of lived experience with homelessness in Martha’s place could stay in residence as long as they needed compared to an average staying time in transitional housing from three months to three years overall Canada (Employment and Social Development Canada, 2019). Residents would not feel a sense of time-squeeze because of the unlimited living time and long-term assistance provided (time orientation), and they did not need to move to new shelters frequently, disrupting life patterns (rhythms). However, this did not extend to the remainder of Samaritan House. With more approved time staying in the supportive housing, participants have more time to get away from the period of homelessness in the past, learn skills to get independent, integrate into society again, and potentially explore much needed leisure pursuits.

## **Recommendations for Samaritan House and Other General Service Providers**

As a design thinking study, the concentration of the research was on the met and unmet leisure needs of women of lived experience with homelessness (Voltage Control, 2019). By having a complete understanding of the leisure needs and preferences of this population, recommendations for related institutions could be provided to design more accessible leisure spaces and conditions (Micheli et al., 2019). According to Voltage Control (2019), after defining participants' unmet needs, the design thinking process includes steps of brainstorming solutions, getting feedback from participants and testing if those solutions addressed original issues. Recommendations of this study were based on participants' perspective and were adjusted based on feedback from Samaritan House staff. Suggestions below could be provided to Samaritan House and Island Crisis Care Society to satisfy residents' leisure needs.

*LEAP program for free or discounted leisure activities.* The LEAP program is designed by the City of Nanaimo for populations who encounter financial constraints in the City of Nanaimo, City of Lantzville and the surrounding area, including Electoral Areas A (Cranberry, Cedar, South Wellington), B (Gabriola Island), and C (Extension, East Wellington) (The City of Nanaimo, 2017). Those eligible could enjoy a fee discount of 50 percent (to a maximum of 40 dollars) for four courses each year. Moreover, they would get an annual pass with up to 50 admissions to Skate/Swim/Gym. The LEAP program makes leisure facilities and leisure education opportunities much more accessible to people in financial need. Members of the focus group mentioned that: "So you can go skating, you can work out in the gym, you can swim. There's a lot of things. Aerobics or something like that." Although activities options are limited, this program protects people's right to participate in leisure activities. All in all, to some extent, the LEAP program provided more opportunities and promote accessibility to leisure activities;

however, this program had yet to increase benefits to fully enable women of lived experience with homelessness to gain leisure education and take part in their interested leisure programs. For example, *the range of types of leisure activities* was still limited to a handful of specific activities. According to COH (2019), new leisure activities and habits are helpful for individuals to build and strengthen connection with their community and neighborhood. Women of lived experience with homelessness have multiple leisure hobbies such as kayaking, biking and listening to concerts but they were not able to engage in them because of lack of finances. Financial support programs such as the LEAP program should cover more types of leisure programs in the city so that women can learn new leisure skills through these official supports. Likewise, *related courses to support new leisure pursuits* were suggested by participants as well. Although the LEAP program did provide admissions for women of lived experience with homelessness, they still cannot participate in activities which they never tried or mastered. Appropriate guidance by professional or leisure skill classes would be also essential for promoting their leisure participation and enhancing leisure skills. For example, to engage women who are homeless in skating which requires the ability of balance, the ice center in Nanaimo could termly develop some free class programs for the homeless population.

***Transportation support.*** COH (2020) suggested that public transit should be affordable and dependable for women to go outside for work, recreation and getting basic necessities resources, as well as to facilitate their economic and social participation and access to various social services. When participants had need to go outside or have a trip, they could get free bus passes from Samaritan House. As one member of the focus group said, “We don't need anybody to pick us up. We can get bus passes and go to Parksville for the day. And then just get a bus there and back.” They could go for a trip by bus together or individually with a well-scheduled

bus plan, which enables them to go to places with bus stations within Nanaimo, and the nearby city. Limited bus passes, however, were not enough to satisfy the transportation needs for women of lived experience with homelessness. Related institutions or governments could assist *with fees to support multiple modes of transportation* for this population so that they could truly go anywhere either inside or outside Nanaimo. That is, transportation support could be provided not only for the bus pass, but some expensive transportation options such as ferry ticket to Newcastle Island or even to Vancouver.

***Cross-Age interaction.*** Age accessibility is significant to one participant: “I think the young need to see the old and I think the old need to see the young. Seek their youth and whatever else.” This participant loves music and believes that music can draw all age groups together. There may be a generation gap between people of different ages, but communication across ages is needed. It also makes sense for both the elder and the young to obtain a better understanding of others’ thoughts and learn from others. *Communication between the old and the young* should be promoted on various occasions including in the public space and at some interactive activities. As Kal said, “The kids, it takes that experience to give back, they got the youth, they got the technical stuff to pass on to us to that, we're counting on them for that, changes every day. One does not know. A new button there, I don't know. There should be more opportunities for the younger, the more I think it's our job if somebody didn't do it, the next generation got how to conduct yourself and maybe look for mentors, more than just stoners, so you're not treated like a second-class citizen. ... And there needs to be set manners and respect in the house, and I think they are losing that real fast.” She suggested a place for both the young and the old to live together so that people could share their skills or mind with each other. The young have good physical conditions and energy with a good understanding of contemporary

technology, and the old have more life experience. People of these two ages can talk about what they are good at and explore areas they don't know about. The differences in their speed of life and their habits might be numerous, but that's precisely why they can have an unlimited conversation. According to Gottdiener (1997), places made for public interaction have continuously decreased, which leads to fewer free and open discussions among all age's groups. Reorganizing the communication between the old and the young not only promotes social communication but also makes good use of public space.

***Time management education.*** Instead of simply devoting attention to economic activities such as paid time (i.e., gainful employment), government and policymakers should understand and reduce time poverty of the marginal population. Enhancing the life convenience of women who are homeless and decreasing unpaid time allocated to satisfy personal needs could create more time for leisure. For example, adequate provision of basic infrastructure and resources help women experiencing homelessness to reduce time required to access basic necessities such as firewood/heat, food and water, etc. The less unpaid time women spent in satisfying basic necessities, the more time they could participate in leisure activities. Organizational leaders could provide guided courses or counsel about time management for women experiencing homelessness as well. Learning to manage and make good use of time will increase women's work efficiency and save wasted time (Walsh et al., 2010). When their time is well organized as a long-term habit, these people can schedule leisure activities in their spare time regularly, which promotes their psychological and economic well-being at the same time.

#### **Suggestions of leisure needs for Samaritan House.**

***Facilities and space designed for leisure activities.*** There were some suggestions provided by residences in Samaritan House. Some of these recommendations related to the

potential for a new day-use space coming to Nanaimo or a new shelter space for Samaritan House. Specifically, participants indicated that *outdoor and indoor spaces designed for leisure purposes* are necessary. According to BC housing (2017), all emergency shelters should design recreation areas for common use and increase accessibility to facilities for every individual. A multi-purpose room was suggested for “activities/art use, meetings, training classroom, social services programs, or as a quiet area for people to relieve stress”, which could promote personal well-being especially for “elderly persons and people with mental health illnesses” (p.23). Participants in the focus group advised, for instance, that: “They need a space for yoga and meditation or just like a journaling area or the supplies for it.” As Kal suggested, they could “have that meditation room, so you can do the breathing, have sign-up sheets, like around the days, you get your money that comes in to go that evening and do kayaking and pay a couple of bucks for that instead of going out for drugging or overspending, like for things that aren't going to contribute to your own life. ... A space that maybe some art material such as pens, paper, music.” One participant in the focus group mentioned that: “Outside space to I mean, watching and her garden, you can see that she's at peace. She had an outdoor space and maybe had a few yoga mats or just things to push us to do some of the activities. Something that gave us the ability to try something new and the material was there to use.” They also mentioned a house in Nanaimo which Samaritan House could learn from (Selby Street Mission): “This house has a beautiful backyard that is open to people who want to go out and play in the garden. This room is open for people to do creative expression. There are crayons, there's a marker, there are all these things. There's a foyer where you can sit and have tea and just communicate.”

***Make good use of nature.*** Leisure programs designed and group trips positioned in nature were suggested. According to COH (2019), meaningful activities should include a range

of options fitting one's skills, ability and interest. One goal of meaningful activities is to reduce social exclusion and encourage people experiencing homelessness to integrate into normal life. As a more accessible leisure space with less economic cost, nature has potential for women to pursue their leisure interests. Staff in Samaritan House could create leisure opportunities for residents in the house. Painting natural landscapes, meditation or yoga on the lakeside, walking in a forest, collecting nature items... Everything in nature, no matter if it is the material picked on the ground or the view enjoyed by people's eyes could be imagined as a leisure opportunity. Developing more leisure possibilities in nature would encourage women to walk outside and facilitate women's interest in outdoor leisure activities.

***Collaborate with agencies for leisure education.*** Through appropriate leisure education, women of lived experience would be able to enhance recreational skills (Roder et al., 1998), better arrange time, and explore their authentic interests (Dail, 1992; Grabbe et al., 2013; Kunstler, 1991, 1992; McNulty et al., 2009). Participants in the focus group proposed an idea of cooperation *with agencies to organize leisure education and opportunities for participation*: “Agencies that could connect with Samaritan that would be really helpful are private agencies or private businesses, like say yoga, could come in and do like, maybe twice a week because like, I did a yoga class once and I slept for five hours after.” Yen proposed the idea of community partnership: “if we could work with other partnerships in the community, ... for our house. It's not for free for everybody. ... if they had like that kind of activities, partnerships, like even tetherball on the property, or even a volleyball net, three or four people can go there, even two people, make that movement, create that movement, so your body feels better.” There was also one piece of advice from the focus group: “They can designate one person to say like, we're doing recreation this week. ... like anybody who wants to go for a walk, want to go to Bowen

Park, because they have a routine there, like they have bars. Like that for everybody in the community.” This activity leader role could be filled by a hired or volunteer staff, or a resident of the House. Also, leisure skills courses such as self-defense were proposed by participant’s like Yen: “You can teach us a few defense movements (karate) that we can take care of ourselves when you know, when we're out in the real world.” Equipping with defensive leisure skills is conducive to protecting themselves in case of encountering criminalization (COH, 2019).

***Social worker support.*** Social workers are regularly invited by Samaritan House to provide support or counsel for women of lived experience with homelessness. Women of lived experience have their negative experience or difficulty to some degree, while empathy and encouragement provided by social workers services were the best possible care to help this marginal population go through their trauma and hardship (COH, 2019). Assistance provided by these people was professional and patient, and this kind of support should be strongly promoted. As Yen said, “She has her psychology license, she comes here, she volunteers one day a week for people for the meditation and breathing deep and she's an excellent resource. She helps other people with the counseling, that's where I would go to her for. That's really good resources. So, take advantage of them like they're here for you.” Participants in the focus group also had positive comments about this counselor, who is a volunteer: “She’s probably one of the better counselors in the area. And if we were to see her outside of a Samaritan House, it would probably cost \$400 and \$850 an hour.” The social worker invited by staff in Samaritan House provided a free and effective service for women of lived experience with homelessness, and such community services should be provided more frequently to speed up the resolution of participants' psychological and social problems (Walsh et al., 2010).

*Group gathered activities.* Opportunities for personal skills exchange and group travel were proposed by participants to facilitate their leisure participation by gathering everyone's strengths and encouraging each other. Laal and Ghodsi (2012) indicated that collaboration was a process with individual's responsibility shared which promoted more positive relationship (Webb, 1980) and built a supportive atmosphere (Johnson & Johnson, 1990).

Synergy in workshop activities could make things more effective and promote encouragement among the members of the group. As Yen said, "I think everybody should have a contribution even if it might be a little bit less than the average working person. .... I'm accessing the resources within the group, like, somebody can do a workshop on collages. I think everybody has a resource and just tapping into that and pulling it to work with the group. You don't need a big education to do that. All you need is to have the material." Yen preferred the sense of cooperating and encouraging within the group. She used to donate a lot of coloring books to the Samaritan House, and there were six women coloring those books one night together, which made her feel awesome and relaxed. Similarly, a member of the focus group was pleased to share her skill with her child and youth care degree. As she said, "I'm sure I can pull something out of my package, to be able to do an hour workshop. And there are a lot of well-educated women at Samaritan House as well that could provide – and if even if they don't have the education – they still have something to provide." Every woman of lived experience with homelessness has her own skill or advantage and she could share these skills within the group. Following this type of strengths-based approach would allow participants in group activities to exchange their leisure skills and teach each other in group activities so that they could develop and share more personal skills. From Yen's perspective, the synergy of group work could be powerful and encouraging for women of lived experience with homelessness. She believed that people would encourage

each other when doing group work: “People are really encouraging, the words that were encouraging. I could see like pictures, visual, have a great day, whatever.” As the focus group suggested, there should be a morning discussion to bring residents together, plan some group recreation activities, and encourage each other to support other women in the same situation. Finally, one group participant suggested “Maybe trips to go out and do something or have a day trip to like, have a group of us just go out and do something.” The group gathered activities could promote partnership and cooperation within residents in Samaritan House, and leisure activities such as drawing and travelling could function as more accessible options if there were a well-planned process and shared responsibilities, organized by a group.

### **Sustainability**

The findings of this thesis correspond with four of United Nations Sustainable Development Goals: good health and wellbeing, gender equality, reduced inequalities and sustainable cities and communities (United Nations, 2015). First, as noted above, leisure participation can benefit physical, mental and social health for women of lived experience with homelessness, who typically have worse health outcomes than their sheltered counter parts. As for physical health, participants indicated that they could breathe deeply and better monitor their physiological state. In terms of mental health, participants perceived an improved state of mind and increased confidence associated with leisure involvement. When it comes to social health and well-being, participants presented unmet esteem needs tied to perceived judgment and exclusion, which could be resolved during intentional, inclusive leisure participation. Second, women of lived experience with homelessness tended to have more stress than males, including higher possibility of victimization by partners (Hagen, 1987) or by others in public spaces (Day, 2000). They also experienced more time pressure associated with caregiving duties and other

gendered experiences (Fraenkel, 2020). As a tool to cope with long-term stress and daily stress, leisure activities may enable these women to escape or manage life difficulties (Iwasaki, 2003). Third, transportation, public space, time, and economic constraints were mentioned by participants in this research, and suggestions for services and community planning were proposed to address these social justice issues. Appropriate design of public spaces and encouragement of humane treatment within the community, and via shared leisure experience may build up respect, decrease barriers to leisure space, and ultimately facilitate the sustainability of the City of Nanaimo and its various communities. This latter concern was partly addressed, by virtue of giving voice to women of lived experience with homelessness, understanding their authentic leisure experience and leisure needs, and facilitating a process that would empower them to co-design solutions for their leisure participation.

### **Research Limitations**

While the findings in this study richly addressed the research questions, there were still limitations that should be acknowledged and considered for further research.

The first limitation came from the timing. This thesis was based on the research conducted in the year 2018 when things were relatively calm in the city of Nanaimo. In the time that the thesis has been completed there was a pandemic called COVID-19 which led to a huge change in all people's lives, especially the homeless population. Many businesses, agencies, and government services were temporarily closed, or open with limited or no face-to-face interaction, and the public was influenced and exposed to the virus to some extent. Although this thesis was finished in 2020, because the data came from 2018, this thesis fails to account for COVID related challenges experienced by this high-risk population of women experiencing homelessness in Nanaimo.

As for the second limitation, because secondary data were used, it is possible that the present study did not completely represent all leisure needs of women of lived experience with homelessness. The secondary data used came from a project with a broad focus, which explored leisure, well-being and faith-based needs with the goal of developing faith-based and leisure programming for women of lived experience with homelessness in Samaritan House. “Leisure”, “well-being” and “faith” made up the main components of the previous study, while this thesis chose merely one factor – “leisure” - as the central aim of the research. Relying on the secondary data meant that I could not engage myself in the research process, which meant that I could not specifically ask the participants about their leisure needs and leisure experiences or expand on ideas discovered in the data via my own analysis.

An additional limitation associated with the data set is that it only represents the perspectives of a limited number of residents at one shelter. Because these women were sheltered, sober, volunteers and given that fewer than 20 women participated in a community with over 400 documented people experiencing homelessness, the data should be generalized with caution.

The final limitation was my self-identification as the researcher of the study. I had little knowledge of the homeless population before engaging in the project conducted by the principal investigators. I gained my understanding of women experiencing homelessness by listening to expert views, reading related literature, and reviewing the original data. However, I may lack the practical experience of visiting this population and communicating with them directly. Furthermore, as an international student studying abroad in Canada, being unfamiliar with Canadian culture could be another obstacle for me in the process of the research. Therefore, the

recommendations provided in this study may not completely or accurately address the issues existing for women who are homeless.

### **Theoretical Implications and Future Research**

Academically, this study enriched our understanding of “leisure needs”, particularly as it relates to underrepresented populations such as women who are homeless. While most research to date concentrated on physical health and housing needs of this population as social and public health issues, this study drew attention to personal leisure needs and opportunities that may help prevent and respond to these broader issues.

Moreover, most homeless studies are conducted in first-tier cities such as Vancouver and Toronto. This leisure study is positioned in a second-tier urban area like Nanaimo and Parksville, adding a different lens. There might be some different backgrounds and experiences in cities of different sizes, and consideration of the homeless women population in smaller cities will enable the homeless population as a whole to be better represented.

Additionally, there are numerous studies focusing on the homeless population through collecting literature, analyzing official health or population data, and comparing experiences of homeless individuals, while design-thinking approaches are seldom utilized, and the inner world of homelessness is ignored. The participant-based design-thinking approach used in this research may better reflect the authentic perspective and the real world of participants, and this could be a starting point for future research to concentrate more on participant’s voice rather than on third party observations or more objective measures.

Last but not least, this thesis was based on the data collected in 2018, and the situation and surrounding of women of lived experience with homelessness continues to evolve. There was a worldwide pandemic outbreak in 2020, and the circumstances of the homeless population

broadly have changed. Future research could take this complicated and changing social situation into account and explore further solutions for leisure participation among this group of people during a dual crisis.

### **Conclusion**

This research focused on the authentic leisure needs of women of lived experience with homelessness in Samaritan House in Nanaimo, and how to meet their needs to promote their leisure participation. As a design-thinking study, most opinions were based on the participants' perspective, which showed the real world of women experiencing homelessness and reflected relevant suggestions that could really help this population. Aiming at facilitating leisure participation and well-being of women of lived experience with homelessness, outcomes of this thesis could be useful to a wide range of stakeholders including the Nanaimo Homeless Coalition, Island Crisis Care Society and Samaritan's House, and the city of Nanaimo.

The Samaritan's House, which belongs to the Island Crisis Care Society, provided supportive housing for women of lived experience with homelessness and met their housing and safety needs. Satisfying their basic necessities, however, may not be enough for this population to get away from their present homeless situation and return to normal life. This study offered advice on leisure aspects for the Samaritan House to encourage residents' leisure participation and promote their well-being through a variety of leisure activities. Residents in Samaritan House could get support such as leisure education and consultation from various social service providers to enhance their leisure skills and personal development.

Findings revealed that financial constraints, public space exclusion and transportation constraints were major barriers to leisure facilities, and assistance and related policies were still insufficient toward women of lived experience with homelessness. Government and

policymakers should consider improving LEAP programs and related actions to fulfill the leisure needs of this population and promote equality and social inclusion among all people, so as to reduce women's stress and encourage their participation in public leisure spaces.

## *References*

- Acosta, O., & Toro, P. A. (2000). Let's ask the homeless people themselves: A needs assessment based on a probability sample of adults. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 28(3), 343-366.
- Alexandris, K., Tsorbatzoudis, C., & Grouios, G. (2002). Perceived constraints on recreational sport participation: Investigating their relationship with intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation and amotivation. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 34(3), 233-252.
- Atherton, L., Stepney, J., Hamilton J., & Smart, B. (2004). Care for the homeless: A nurse-run PMS. *Practice Nursing*, 15(3), 114-117.
- Bachrach, L. L. (1992). What we know about homelessness among mentally ill persons: An analytical review and commentary. *Psychiatric Services*, 43(5), 453-464.
- Baggett, T. P., O'Connell, J. J., Singer, D. E., & Rigotti, N. A. (2010). The unmet health care needs of homeless adults: A national study. *American Journal of Public Health*, 100(7), 1326-1333.
- Baker Collins, S. (2005). An understanding of poverty from those who are poor. *Action Research*, 3(1), 9-31.
- Bale, J. (1993). *Sport, space and the city*. Routledge.
- Ballinger, S. (2002). *Homesick: Shelter and Bradford and Bingley's Campaign for Healthy Homes*. London.
- Banyard, V. L., & Graham-Bermann, S. A. (1998). Surviving poverty: Stress and coping in lives of housed and homeless mothers. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 68(3), 479-489.
- Banyard, V., & Graham-Bermann, S. A. (1995). Building an empowerment policy paradigm: Self-reported strengths of homeless mothers. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 65(4), 479-491.

- Baum, A., & Brune, D. (1993). *A nation in denial: The truth about homelessness*. Westview Press.
- BC Housing. (2017). *Shelter Design Guidelines*.  
<https://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:dpp9WsJxnLMJ:https://www.bchousing.org/publications/Shelter-Design-Guidelines.pdf+&cd=1&hl=zh-CN&ct=clnk&gl=ca&client=safari>
- Beard, J., & Ragheb, M. (1980). Measuring leisure satisfaction. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 12(1), 20-23.
- Berlyne, D. E., & Crozier, J. B. (1971). Effects of complexity and prechoice stimulation on exploratory choice. *Perception & Psychophysics*, 10(4), 242-246.
- Beverland, M. B., Wilner, S. J., & Micheli, P. (2015). Reconciling the tension between consistency and relevance: design thinking as a mechanism for brand ambidexterity. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 43(5), 589-609.
- Blau, J. (1992). *The visible poor: Homelessness in the United States*. Oxford University Press.
- Bowling, C. (2000). *The working poor: Negotiating life*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign.
- Boydell, K. M., Goering, P., & Morrell-Bellai, T. L. (2000). Narratives of identity: Representation of self in people who are homeless. *Qualitative Health Research*, 10(1), 26–38.
- Braun, V., Clarke, V., & Terry, G. (2012). Thematic analysis. In H. Cooper (Ed.), *APA handbook of research methods in psychology (55-71)*. American Psychological Association.
- Brightbill, C. K., & Mobley, T. A. (1977). Educating for leisure-centered living. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 11(4), 343–344.
- Brown, T. (2008). Design thinking. *Harvard Business Review*, 86(6), 84.

- Brown, T., & Katz, B. (2011). Change by design. *Journal of Product Innovation Management*, 28(3), 381-383.
- Brown, T., & Wyatt, J. (2010). Design thinking for social innovation. *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, 12(1), 29-43.
- Brush, B., & Powers, E. M. (2001). Health and service utilization patterns among home-less men in transition: Exploring the need for on-site, shelter-based nursing care. *Scholarly Inquiry for Nursing Practice*, 15(2), 143-154.
- Bunston, T., & Breton, M. (1992). Homes and homeless women. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 12(2), 149-162.
- Burt, M. R., & Cohen, B. E. (1989). Differences among homeless single women, women with children, and single men. *Social Problems*, 36(5), 508-524.
- Bush, C. (2018). Camps removed; safety order issued at A&B Sound building. *Nanaimo News Bulletin*. <https://www.nanaimobulletin.com/news/camps-removed-safety-order-issued-at-ab-sound-building/>
- Buzan, T. (2018). *Mind Map Mastery: The Complete Guide to Learning and Using the Most Powerful Thinking Tool in the Universe*. Watkins Media Limited.
- Calsyn, R. J., & Morse, G. (1990). Homeless men and women: Commonalities and a service gender gap. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 18(4), 597-608.
- Casey, R., Goudie, R., & Reeve, K. (2008). Homeless women in public spaces: Strategies of resistance. *Housing Studies*, 23(6), 899-916.
- Cattaneo, L. B., & Chapman, A. R. (2010). The process of empowerment: a model for use in research and practice. *American Psychologist*, 65(7), 646-659.

- Caulfield, J. (2020). *How to do thematic analysis / A step-by-step guide & examples*. Scribbr.  
<https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/thematic-analysis/>
- CCSD. (2010). *Economic Security Fact Sheet #2: Poverty*. Stats & Facts.  
[http://www.ccsd.ca/factsheets/economic\\_security/poverty/index.htm](http://www.ccsd.ca/factsheets/economic_security/poverty/index.htm)
- Chambers, C., Chiu, S., Scott, A. N., Tolomiczenko, G., Redelmeier, D. A., Levinson, W., & Hwang, S. W. (2014). Factors associated with poor mental health status among homeless women with and without dependent children. *Community mental health journal, 50*(5), 553-559.
- Chen, B., Van Assche, J., Vansteenkiste, M., Soenens, B., & Beyers, W. (2015). Does psychological need satisfaction matter when environmental or financial safety are at risk?. *Journal of Happiness Studies, 16*(3), 745-766.
- Chen, M., & Pang, X. (2012). Leisure motivation: An integrative review. *Social Behavior and Personality: An International Journal, 40*(7), 1075-1081.
- City of Nanaimo. (2019). *Overnight Shelter in Parks*. <https://www.nanaimo.ca/culture-environment/community-and-social-service-programs/homelessness/overnight-shelter-in-parks>
- City of Vancouver. (2020). *Homeless count*. <https://vancouver.ca/people-programs/homeless-count.aspx>
- CNIUW. (2018). *Homelessness in Nanaimo: Everyone counts: 2018 point-in-time count report*.  
[https://www.nanaimo.ca/docs/social-culture-environment/community-social-service-programs/nanaimo-pit-count-report-2018\\_final\\_june-6.pdf](https://www.nanaimo.ca/docs/social-culture-environment/community-social-service-programs/nanaimo-pit-count-report-2018_final_june-6.pdf)
- COH. (2012.) Canadian Definition of Homelessness. *Toronto: Canadian Observatory on Homelessness Press*. [www.homelesshub.ca/homelessdefinition](http://www.homelesshub.ca/homelessdefinition)

- COH. (2018). *Community files*. Homeless hub. <https://www.homelesshub.ca/community-profile/nanaimo>
- COH. (2019). *Addressing legal and justice issues*. The Homeless Hub. <https://www.homelesshub.ca/solutions/providing-supports/addressing-legal-and-justice-issues>
- COH. (2019). *Connection to community*. The Homeless Hub. <https://www.homelesshub.ca/solutions/providing-supports/connection-community>
- COH. (2019). *Meaningful activities*. The Homeless Hub. <https://www.homelesshub.ca/solutions/providing-supports/meaningful-activities>
- COH. (2019). *Trauma informed care*. The Homeless Hub. <https://www.homelesshub.ca/solutions/providing-supports/trauma-informed-care>
- COH. (2019). *Victoria*. The Homeless Hub. <https://www.homelesshub.ca/community-profile/victoria>
- COH. (2020). *Does transit matter? Connections between transportation systems & homelessness for women in Canada*. The Homeless Hub. <https://www.homelesshub.ca/blog/does-transit-matter-connections-between-transportation-systems-homelessness-women-canada>
- Collier, J. (1957). Photography in anthropology: A report on two experiments. *American Anthropologist*, 59(5), 843-859.
- Commander, M., Davis, A., McCabe, A., & Stanyer, A. (2002). A comparison of homeless and domiciled young people. *Journal of Mental Health*, 11(5), 557-564.
- Conger, J. A., & Kanungo, R. N. (1988). The empowerment process: Integrating theory and practice. *Academy of Management Review*, 13(3), 471-482.

- Connell, S. E. F., & Tenkasi, R. V. (2015). Operational practices and archetypes of design thinking. *Research in Organizational Change and Development*, 23, 195-252.
- Cooke, P. J., Melchert, T. P., & Connor, K. (2016). Measuring well-being: A review of instruments. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 44(5), 730-757.
- Corring, D., Johnston, M. E., & Rudnick, A. (2010). Effects of a supported program for horseback riding on inpatients diagnosed with schizophrenia: A qualitative exploratory study. *American Journal of Recreation Therapy*, 9(3), 41-46.
- Cowan, C. D., Breakey, W. R., & Fischer, P. J. (1988). The methodology of counting the homeless. *Homelessness, Health, and Human Needs*, 12-20.
- CPRA & ISRC. (2015). *A framework for recreation in Canada 2015: Pathways to wellbeing*. Canadian Recreation and Parks Association.
- Cramer, J. (2000). Entertainment. *Leisure Management*, 20(5), 36-41.
- Crandall, R. (1980). Motivations for leisure. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 12(1), 45-54.
- Crane M., Warnes A.M. (2001). Primary health care services for single homeless people: Defects and opportunities. *Family Practice Journal*, 18(3), 272-276.
- Crane M., Warnes A.M. (2006) Developing homelessness prevention practice: Combining research evidence and professional knowledge. *Health Social Care in the Community*, 14(2), 156-166
- Crane, P. (2000). Young people and public space: Developing inclusive policy and practice. *Scottish Youth Issues Journal*, 1(1), 105-124.
- Crawford, D. W., & Godbey, G. (1987). Reconceptualizing barriers to family leisure. *Leisure Sciences*, 9(2), 119-127.

- Crawford, D. W., Jackson, E. L., & Godbey, G. (1991). A hierarchical model of leisure constraints. *Leisure Sciences, 13*(4), 309-320.
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2017). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Sage publications.
- Creswell, J. W. (2015). *30 Essential Skills for the Qualitative Researcher*. Sage Publications.
- Creswell, J.W. (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (Fifth Ed). Sage publications.
- Crystal, S. (1984). Homeless men and homeless women: The gender gap. *Urban and Social Change Review, 17*(2), 2–6.
- Dail, P. W. (1992). Recreation as socialization for the homeless: An argument for inclusion. *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance, 63*(4), 37–40.
- Darmon N., Coupel J., Deheeger M., & Briend A. (2001) Dietary inadequacies observed in homeless men visiting an emergency night shelter. *Public Health Nutrition, 4*(2), 155-161.
- Dawson, D., & Harrington, M. (1996). “For the most part, it’s not fun and games.” Homelessness and recreation. *Loisir Et Société/Leisure and Society, 19*(2), 415–435.
- Day, K. (2000). The ethic of care and women's experiences of public space. *Journal of Environmental Psychology, 20*(2), 103–124.
- DCAGP. (2019). *A special campaign was launched in Guangdong to find and send home vagrants and beggars who have been stranded for a long time.*  
[https://smzt.gd.gov.cn/mzxx/mzyw/content/post\\_2702379.html](https://smzt.gd.gov.cn/mzxx/mzyw/content/post_2702379.html)
- De Vries, D., & Feenstra, A. (2019). Making the case for recreational therapy services with individuals experiencing homelessness. *World Leisure Journal, 61*(2), 77-97.

- Deci, E. L., Koestner, R., & Ryan, R. M. (1999). A meta-analytic review of experiments examining the effects of extrinsic rewards on intrinsic motivation. *Psychological Bulletin*, 125(6), 627-668.
- Docherty, C. (2017). Perspectives on design thinking for social innovation. *The Design Journal*, 20(6), 719-724.
- Dodge, R., Daly, A. P., Huyton, J., & Sanders, L. D. (2012). The challenge of defining wellbeing. *International Journal of Wellbeing*, 2(3), 222-235.
- Dorst, K. (2011). The core of 'design thinking' and its application. *Design studies*, 32(6), 521-532.
- Driscoll, K., & Wood, L. (1998). *A Public Life: Disadvantage and homelessness in the capital city*. Department of Social Science and Social Work, RMIT.
- Driver, B. L., Tinsley, H., & Manfredi, M. J. (1991). Results from two inventories designed to assess the breadth of the perceived psychological benefits of leisure. *Benefits of leisure*, 263-286.
- Dunn Ross, E. L., & Iso-Ahola, S. E. (1991). Sightseeing tourists' motivation and satisfaction. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 18(2), 226-237.
- Ellis, M. J. (1973). *Why people play*. Prentice-Hall.
- Elson, D. (1995). *Male bias in the development process*. Manchester University Press.
- Elstad, J.I. (1998). The psycho-social perspective on social inequalities in health. *The Sociology of Health Inequalities* 20(5), 598-618.
- ESDC. (2019). *Shelter Capacity Report 2018*. Canada.ca.  
<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/homelessness/publications-bulletins/shelter-capacity-2018.html>

- Ezzedeen, S. R., & Zikic, J. (2017). Finding balance amid boundarylessness: An interpretive study of entrepreneurial work–life balance and boundary management. *Journal of Family Issues, 38*(11), 1546-1576.
- Fisher, B., Hovell, M., Hofstetter, C. R., & Hough, R. (1995). Risks associated with long-term homelessness among women: battery, rape, and HIV infection. *International Journal of Health Services, 25*(2), 351-369.
- Fitzpatrick, K. M., & LaGory, M. (2011). *Unhealthy cities: Poverty, race, and place in America*. Routledge.
- Fitzpatrick, K. M., LaGory, M., & Ritchey, F. (2003). Factors associated with health-compromising behavior among the homeless. *Journal of Health Care for The Poor and Underserved, 14*(1), 70-86.
- Fogel, S. J. (1997). Moving along: An exploratory study of homeless women with children using a transitional housing program. *Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare, 24*(3), 113-133.
- Fraenkel, P. (1994). Time and rhythm in couples. *Family Process, 33*(1), 37-51.
- Frisby, W., & Millar, S. (2002). The actualities of doing community development to promote the inclusion of low-income populations in local sport and recreation. *European sport management quarterly, 2*(3), 209-233.
- Frisch, M. B., Cornell, J., Villanueva, M., & Retzlaff, P. J. (1992). Clinical validation of the Quality of Life Inventory. A measure of life satisfaction for use in treatment planning and outcome assessment. *Psychological Assessment, 4*(1), 92-101.
- Fullagar, S. (2008). Leisure practices as counter-depressants: Emotion-work and emotion-play within women's recovery from depression. *Leisure Sciences, 30*(1), 35-52.

- Gaetz, S., Dej, E., Richter, T., & Redman, M. (2016). *Homelessness Canada in the state of 2016*. Canadian Observatory on Homelessness Press. Toronto: Canadian Observatory on Homelessness Press.
- Gaetz, S., Gulliver, T., & Richter, T. (2014). *The state of homelessness in Canada 2014*. Homeless Hub. <https://homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/attachments/SOHC2014.pdf>
- Garland, A. (2020). *Regional District of Nanaimo passes bylaw allowing homeless to camp in select parks*. CTV Vancouver Island. <https://vancouverisland.ctvnews.ca/regional-district-of-nanaimo-passes-bylaw-allowing-homeless-to-camp-in-select-parks-1.4828907>
- Gelberg, L., Browner, C. H., Lejano, E., & Arangua, L. (2004). Access to women's health care: A qualitative study of barriers perceived by homeless women. *Women & Health, 40*(2), 87-100.
- Ghosh, J. (2016). Time poverty and the poverty of economics. *METU Studies in Development, 43*(1), 1-19.
- Giurge, L. M., Whillans, A. V., & West, C. (2020). Why time poverty matters for individuals, organisations and nations. *Nature Human Behaviour, 4*(10), 993-1003.
- Glen, R., Suci, C., & Baughn, C. (2014). The need for design thinking in business schools. *Academy of Management Learning & Education, 13*(4), 653-667.
- Gloger, F., Butt, N., De Gaetano, R., & Thompson, R. (2004). *Homelessness in Toronto: A review of the literature from a Toronto perspective*. Community Social Planning Council of Toronto.
- Goodman, L., Saxe, L., & Harvey, M. (1991). Homelessness as a psychological trauma: Broadening perspectives. *American Psychologist, 46*(11), 1219-1225.

- Gottdiener, M. (2019). *The theming of America: Dreams, visions, and commercial spaces*. Routledge.
- Grabbe, L., Ball, J., & Goldstein, A. (2013). Gardening for the mental well-being of homeless women. *Journal of Holistic Nursing, 31*(4), 258–266.
- Graham, H. (2002). Socio-economic change and inequalities in men and women's health in the UK'. In S. Nettleton & U. Gustafsson (Eds.), *Gender inequalities in health (pp. 90-122)*. Open University Press.
- Green, K. (2001). "We Did It together": Low-income mothers Working Toward a Healthier community. *Prairie Women's Health Centre of Excellence, 1-51*.
- Gruber, M., De Leon, N., George, G., & Thompson, P. (2015). Managing by design. *Academy of Management Journal, 58*(1), 1-7.
- Gunn, L., & Caissie, L. T. (2006). Serial murder as an act of deviant leisure. *Leisure/Loisir, 30*(1), 27-53.
- Gunter, B. G., & Gunter, N. C. (1980). Leisure styles: A conceptual framework for modern leisure. *Sociological Quarterly, 21*(3), 361-374.
- Hagen, L.H. (1987). Gender and homelessness. *Social Work, 32*, 321–316.
- Hakim, C. (1982). *Secondary analysis in social research: A guide to data sources and method examples*. Allen and Unwin/Unwin Hyman.
- Harari, M. J., Waehler, C. A., & Rogers, J. R. (2005). An empirical investigation of a theoretically based measure of perceived wellness. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 52*(1), 93-103.
- Harper, D. (2002). Talking about pictures: A case for photo elicitation. *Visual studies, 17*(1), 13-26.

- Harvey, A. S., & Mukhopadhyay, A. K. (2007). When twenty-four hours is not enough: Time poverty of working parents. *Social Indicators Research*, 82(1), 57-77.
- Hatch, J. A. (2002). *Doing qualitative research in education settings*. Suny Press.
- Hattie, J. A., Myers, J. E., & Sweeney, T. J. (2004). A factor structure of wellness: Theory, assessment, analysis, and practice. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 82(3), 354-364.
- Hawkins, G., & Gibson, K. (1994). Cultural planning in Australia: Policy dreams, economic realities. *Metropolis now: Planning and the urban in contemporary Australia*, 217-228.
- Hayamizu, T. (1997). Between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation: Examination of reasons for academic study based on the theory of internalization. *Japanese Psychological Research*, 39(2), 98-108.
- Hecht, T. D., & Boies, K. (2009). Structure and correlates of spillover from nonwork to work: An examination of nonwork activities, well-being, and work outcomes. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 14(4), 414-426.
- Hersberger, J. (2005). The homeless and information needs and services. *Reference & User Services Quarterly*, 44(3), 199-202.
- Hiebert, C., & Oncescu, J. (2015). Leisure education, poverty and recreation participation: A case study of a community-based leisure education delivery system. *Innovative Leisure Practices*, 1(1), 11-20.
- Hodgetts, D., & Stolte, O. (2016). Homeless people's leisure practices within and beyond urban socio-scapes. *Urban Studies*, 53(5), 899-914.
- <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/censusrecensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E>
- HSA of BC, BCNPHA, & UM. (2018). *2018 Report on Homeless Counts in B.C. Home*.  
<https://www.bchousing.org/research-centre/housing-data/homeless-counts>

- Huttman, E., & Redmond, S. (1992). Women and homelessness: Evidence of need to look beyond shelters to long term social service assistance and permanent housing. *Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare*, 19(4), 89-111.
- Irwin, J., LaGory, M., Ritchey, F., & Fitzpatrick, K. M. (2008). Social assets and mental distress among the homeless: Exploring the roles of social support and other forms of social capital on depression. *Social Science and Medicine*, 67(12), 1935-1943.
- Island Crisis Care Society. (2019). Housing support services outreach. <https://www.islandcrisiscaresociety.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/2019-ICCS-Brochure-1.pdf>
- Island Crisis Care Society. (n.d.). *Our vision*. Island Crisis Care Society – Support Shelter Safely. <https://www.islandcrisiscaresociety.ca/about-us/our-vision/>
- Iso-Ahola, S. E. (1982). Toward a social psychological theory of tourism motivation: A rejoinder. *Annals of tourism research*, 9(2), 256-262.
- Iso-Ahola, S. E., & Allen, J. R. (1982). The dynamics of leisure motivation: The effects of outcome on leisure needs. *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport*, 53(2), 141-149.
- Israel, B.A., Schulz, A., Parker, E., Becker, A., Allen, A., & Guzman, J.R. (2003). Critical issues in developing and following community-based participatory research principles. *Community-based participatory research for health*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass/Wiley, 53-76.
- Iveson, K. (1998) Putting the public back into public space. *Urban Policy and Research*, 16(1), 21–33.

- Iveson, M., & Cornish, F. (2016). Re-building bridges: Homeless people's views on the role of vocational and educational activities in their everyday lives. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology, 26*(3), 253-267.
- Iwasaki, Y., & Mannell, R. C. (2000). Hierarchical dimensions of leisure stress coping. *Leisure Sciences, 22*(3), 163-181.
- Iwasaki, Y. (2003). Examining rival models of leisure coping mechanisms. *Leisure Sciences, 25*(2-3), 183-206.
- Iwasaki, Y., Messina, E. S., & Hopper, T. (2018). The role of leisure in meaning-making and engagement with life. *The Journal of Positive Psychology, 13*(1), 29-35.
- Jackson, E. L. (1989). *Barriers to participation in desired leisure activities: Analysis of data from the 1988 General Recreation Survey*. Alberta Recreation and Parks.
- Javaherian-Dysinger, H., Krpalek, D., Huecker, E., Hewitt, L., & Cabrera, M., Brown, C., . . . Server, S. (2016). Occupational needs and goals of survivors of domestic violence. *Occupational Therapy in Health Care, 30*(2), 175–186.
- John, W., & Law, K. (2011). Addressing the health needs of the homeless. *British Journal of Community Nursing, 16*(3), 134-139.
- Johnson, A. J., & Glover, T. D. (2013). Understanding urban public space in a leisure context. *Leisure Sciences, 35*(2), 190-197.
- Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. (1990). Using cooperative learning in math. *Cooperative learning in mathematics: A handbook for teachers, 103-125*.
- Kaplan, M. (1960). *Leisure in America: a social inquiry*. Wiley.
- Kay, T., & Jackson, G. (1990). The operation of leisure constraints. In B. J. A. Smale (Ed.), *Leisure challenges: Bringing people, resources, and policy into play—Proceedings, Sixth*

- Canadian Congress on Leisure Research* (pp. 352-356). Ontario Research Council on Leisure.
- Kay, T., & Jeanes, R. (2008). *Women, sport and gender inequity*. In B. Houlihan, *Sport and society: A student introduction* (2nd ed.) (pp. 130-154). Sage.
- Keller, J., & Bless, H. (2008). Flow and Regulatory Compatibility: An Experimental Approach to the Flow Model of Intrinsic Motivation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 34(2), 196-209.
- Kelly, J. R. (1972). Work and leisure: A simplified paradigm. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 4(1), 50-62.
- Kelly, L. (2011). 'Social inclusion' through sports-based interventions?. *Critical Social Policy*, 31(1), 126-150.
- Kemp, P.A., Neale, J., & Robertson, M. (2006). Homelessness among problem drug users: prevalence, risk factors and trigger events. *Health and Social Care in the Community* 14(4), 319-328.
- Keyes, C. L. M. (1998). Social well-being. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 121-140.
- Khosla, P. (2003). *If low-income women of colour counted in Toronto*. Toronto: Community Social Planning Council of Toronto.
- Kines, L. (2020). *Victoria neighbourhoods square off as homeless camps spring up across city*. Vancouver Sun. <https://vancouversun.com/news/0911-victoria-homeless>
- Kleiber, D. A., Hutchinson, S. L., & Williams, R. (2002). Leisure as a resource in transcending negative life events: Self-protection, self-restoration, and personal transformation. *Leisure Sciences*, 24(2), 219-235.

- Klitzing, S. W. (2004). Women living in a homeless shelter: Stress, coping and leisure. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 36(4), 483-512.
- Klitzing, S. W. (2003). Coping with chronic stress: leisure and women who are homeless. *Leisure Sciences*, 25(2-3), 163–181.
- Knestaut, M., Devine, M. A., & Verlezza, B. (2010). “It gives me purpose”: The use of dance with people experiencing homelessness. *Therapeutic Recreation Journal*, 44(4), 289-301.
- Kunstler, R. (1991). There but for fortune: A therapeutic recreation perspective on the homeless in America. *Therapeutic Recreation Journal*, 25(2), 31-40.
- Kunstler, R. (1992). Forging the human connection: Leisure services for the homeless. *Parks & Recreation*, 27(3), 42-44.
- Kushel, M., Evans, J., Perry, S., Robertson, M., & Moss, A. (2003). No door to lock - victimization among homeless and marginally housed persons. *Archives of Internal Medicine*, 163(20), 2492-2499.
- Kuykendall, L., Boemerman, L., & Zhu, Z. (2018). *The importance of leisure for subjective well-being*. Handbook of well-being. DEF Publishers.
- Laal, M., & Ghodsi, S. M. (2012). Benefits of collaborative learning. *Procedia-social and Behavioral Sciences*, 31, 486-490.
- LaGory, M., Ritchey, F., & Mullis, J. (1990). Depression among the homeless. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 31, 87-101.
- Lanius, R. A., Vermetten, E., & Pain, C. (2010). *The impact of early life trauma on health and disease: The hidden epidemic*. Cambridge University Press.
- Lee, B. A., Tyler, K. A., & Wright, J. D. (2010). The new homelessness revisited. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 36, 501-521.

- Leitner, M. J., & Leitner, S. F. (2004). *Leisure enhancement*. Haworth Press.
- Levitt, H. M., Bamberg, M., Creswell, J. W., Frost, D. M., Josselson, R., & Suárez-Orozco, C. (2018). Journal article reporting standards for qualitative research in psychology: The APA publications and communications board task force report. *American Psychologist*, 73(1), 26-46.
- Liedtka, J. (2015). Perspective: Linking design thinking with innovation outcomes through cognitive bias reduction. *Journal of Product Innovation Management*, 32(6), 925-938.
- Lin, N., Ye, X., & Ensel, W. M. (1999). Social support and depressed mood: A structural analysis. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 40(4), 344-359.
- Little, J. (2002). Rural geography: rural gender identity and the performance of masculinity and femininity in the countryside. *Progress in Human Geography*, 26(5), 665-670.
- Lived Experience Advisory Council. (2016). *Nothing about us without us: Seven principles for leadership and inclusion of people with lived experience of homelessness*. Toronto: The Homeless Hub Press. [www.homelesshub.ca/NothingAboutUsWithoutUs](http://www.homelesshub.ca/NothingAboutUsWithoutUs).
- Lloyd, C., King, R., McCarthy, M., & Scanlan, M. (2007). The association between leisure motivation and recovery: A pilot study. *Australian Occupational Therapy Journal*, 54(1), 33-41.
- Lloyd, K., & Auld, C. (2003). Leisure, public space and quality of life in the urban environment. *Urban Policy and Research*, 21(4), 339-356.
- Logan, J. and Molotch, H. (1987). *Urban fortunes: the political economy of place*. University of California Press.
- Long., S. (2019). *Research on Social Assistance in China since the reform and opening up*. University of Jilin.

<https://kns.cnki.net/KCMS/detail/detail.aspx?dbcode=CDFD&dbname=CDFDLAST2019&filename=1019158678.nh&v=MjQ2NjM2RjdLOUZ0ZkxwNUViUEISOGVYMUx1eFITN0RoMVQzcVRyV00xRnJDVVI3cWZiK1pwRmlIZ1VyL1BWRjI=>

- Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. B. (2016). *Designing qualitative research (6th ed.)*. Sage publications.
- Martin, R. L. (2011). The innovation catalysts. *Harvard Business Review*, 89(6), 82-87.
- Martin, R., & Martin, R. L. (2009). *The design of business: Why design thinking is the next competitive advantage*. Harvard Business Press.
- Maslow, A. H. (1989). A theory of human motivation. *Readings in Managerial Psychology*, 20, 20-35.
- McCabe, S., Knee, C. L., & Anderson, M. K. (2001). Homeless patients' experience of satisfaction with care. *Archives of Psychiatric Nursing*, 15(2), 78-85.
- McLeod, H., & Walsh, C. A. (2014). Shelter design and service delivery for women who become homeless after age 50. *Canadian Journal of Urban Research*, 23(1), 23-38.
- McNaughton, C. C., & Sanders, T. (2007). Housing and transitional phases out of “disordered” lives: The case of leaving homelessness and street sex work. *Housing Studies*, 22(6), 885-900.
- McNulty, M. C., Crowe, T. K., Kroening, C., VanLeit, B., & Good, R. (2009). Time use of women with children living in an emergency homeless shelter for survivors of domestic violence. *Occupational Therapy Journal for Research: Occupation, Participation and Health*, 29(4), 183-190.
- Mertens, D. M. (2010). Transformative mixed methods research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 16(6), 469-474.

- Micheli, P., Wilner, S. J., Bhatti, S. H., Mura, M., & Beverland, M. B. (2019). Doing design thinking: Conceptual review, synthesis, and research agenda. *Journal of Product Innovation Management, 36*(2), 124-148.
- Midgley, J. (1990). Social development and multicultural social work. *Journal of Multicultural Social Work, 1*(1), 85-100.
- Minkler, M., & Wallerstein, N. (2003). *Community-based participatory research in health*. Jossey-Bass.
- Montgomery, A. E., Cutuli, J. J., Evans-Chase, M., Treglia, D., & Culhane, D. P. (2013). Relationship among adverse childhood experiences, history of active military service, and adult outcomes: Homelessness, mental health and physical health. *American Journal of Public Health, 103*(2), 262-268.
- NHC., UWC., & NVL. (2020). *Point-in-Time Homeless Count Supports the Need for More Resources*. <https://www.uwcncvi.ca/latest-news/in-your-community/point-time-homeless-count-supports-need-more-resources>
- Nanaimo News Staff. (2018). *Story of the year: Discontent city*. Nanaimo News Bulletin. <https://www.nanaimobulletin.com/news/story-of-the-year-discontent-city/>
- National Alliance to End Homelessness. (2020). *State of homelessness: 2020 edition*. <https://endhomelessness.org/homelessness-in-america/homelessness-statistics/state-of-homelessness-2020/>
- Nedergaard, N., & Gyrd-Jones, R. (2013). Sustainable brand-based innovation: The role of corporate brands in driving sustainable innovation. *Journal of Brand Management, 20*(9), 762-778.

- Neulinger, J. (1974). *The psychology of leisure: Research approaches to the study of leisure*. Thomas.
- Neulinger, J. (1981). *To leisure: An introduction*. To leisure: an introduction.
- Nyamathi, A. M., Leake, B., & Gelberg, L. (2000). Sheltered versus nonsheltered homeless women. *Journal of General Internal Medicine*, 15(8), 565-572.
- O'Grady, B., Gaetz, S., (2004), 'Homelessness, gender and subsistence: The case of Toronto street youth', *Journal of Youth Studies*, 7(4), 397-416.
- Patterson, M., Moniruzzaman, A., Palepu, A., Zabkiewicz, D., Frankish, C. J., Krausz, M., & Somers, J. M. (2013). Housing first improves subjective quality of life among homeless adults with mental illness: 12-month findings from a randomized controlled trial in Vancouver, British Columbia. *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology*, 48(8), 1245-1259.
- Pavao, J., Alvarez, J., Baumrind, Nikki, Induni, M., & Kimerling, R. (2007). Intimate partner violence and housing instability. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 32(2), 143-146.
- Petrovich, J. C., Hunt, J. J., North, C. S., Pollio, D. E., & Murphy, E. R. (2020). Comparing unsheltered and sheltered homeless: Demographics, health services use and predictors of health services use. *Community Mental Health Journal*, 56(2), 271-279.
- Power, R., & Hunter, G. (2001). Developing a strategy for community-based health promotion targeting homeless populations. *Health Education Research*, 16(5), 593-602.
- Ra, C. K., Hebert, E., Alexander, A., Kendzor, D., Suchting, R., & Businelle, M. (2020). *Sheltered homeless adults use more shelter services, have fewer health risk factors, and report lower stress than unsheltered adults*. Research Square.  
<https://doi.org/10.21203/rs.3.rs-32395/v1>

- Raphael-Greenfield, E., & Gutman, S. A. (2015). Understanding the lived experience of formerly homeless adults as they transition to supportive housing. *Occupational Therapy in Mental Health, 31*(1), 35-49.
- Rech, N. (2019). *Homelessness in Canada*. The Canadian Encyclopedia.  
<https://thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/homelessness-in-canada>.
- Reid, D. G., & Golden, B. L. (2005). Non-work and leisure activity and socially marginalized women. *Canadian Review of Social Policy, 55*, 39-65.
- Roder, V., Jenull, B., & Brenner, H. D. (1998). Teaching schizophrenic patients recreational, residential and vocational skills. *International Review of Psychiatry, 10*(1), 35-41.
- Rodriguez, R. M., Fortman, J., Chee, C., Ng, V., & Poon, D. (2009). Food, shelter and safety needs motivating homeless persons' visits to an urban emergency department. *Annals of Emergency Medicine, 53*(5), 598-602.
- Rojek, C. (1999). *Leisure and culture*. Springer.
- Roll, C. N., Toro, P. A., & Ortola, G. L. (1999). Characteristics and experiences of homeless adults: A comparison of single men, single women, and women with children. *Journal of Community Psychology, 27*(2), 189-198.
- Rose, J. (2016). Leisure and Social Class. In I. E. Schneider & B. D. Kivel's (Eds.), *Diversity and inclusion in the recreation profession: Organizational perspectives* (pp. 123-144). Sagamore Publishing.
- Rose, J. (2020). Unsheltered homelessness and the right to metabolism: an urban political ecology of health and sustainability. In A. Melis, J.A. Lara-Hernandez, & J. Thompson (Eds.), *Temporary Appropriation in Cities* (pp. 147-156). Springer.

- Rossi, P. H., & Wright, J. D. (1989). The urban homeless: A portrait of urban dislocation. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 501(1), 132-142.
- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2017). *Self-determination theory: Basic psychological needs in motivation, development, and wellness*. Guilford Publications.
- Ryff, C. D., & Keyes, C. L. M. (1995). The structure of psychological well-being revisited. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 69(4), 719-727.
- Santos-Longhurst, A. (2019). *Intrinsic Motivation: How to Pick Up Healthy Motivation Techniques*. Healthline. <https://www.healthline.com/health/intrinsic-motivation#how-it-works>
- Schisler, C. (2019). *Homeless people deserve to be treated with respect and dignity like everyone else*. Ladysmith Chemainus Chronicle. <https://www.ladysmithchronicle.com/opinion/homeless-people-deserve-to-be-treated-with-respect-and-dignity-like-everyone-else/>
- Schulz, A. J., & Parker, E. A. (2005). *Methods in community-based participatory research for health*. Jossey bass.
- Scott, D. (2013). Economic inequality, poverty, and park and recreation delivery. *Journal of Park & Recreation Administration*, 31(4), 1-11.
- Shin, K., & You, S. (2013). Leisure type, leisure satisfaction and adolescents' psychological wellbeing. *Journal of Pacific Rim Psychology*, 7(2), 53-62.
- Sivan, A., & Stebbins, R. A. (2011). Leisure education: definition, aims, advocacy, and practices—are we talking about the same thing (s)?. *World Leisure Journal*, 53(1), 27-41.
- Smigel, E. O. (1963). *Work and leisure: A contemporary social problem*. New College & University Press.

- Smith, E. M., & North, C. S. (1994). Not all homeless women are alike: Effects of motherhood and the presence of children. *Community Mental Health Journal*, 30(6), 601-610.
- Snethen, G., McCormick, B. P., & Puymbroeck, M. V. (2012). Community involvement, planning and coping skills: Pilot outcomes of a recreational-therapy intervention for adults with schizophrenia. *Disability & Rehabilitation*, 34(18), 1575-1584.
- Spencer, S. (2020). *Samaritan house women's shelter moving and expanding into permanent supportive housing*. Nanaimo News NOW.  
<https://nanaimonewsnow.com/2020/07/14/samaritan-house-womens-shelter-moving-and-expanding-into-permanent-supportive-housing/>
- Statistics Canada. (2017). *Nanaimo, British Columbia and British Columbia*. Census Profile. 2016 Census.
- Stebbins, R. A. (1998). *After work: The search for an optimal leisure lifestyle*. Detselig.
- Stebbins, R. A., Rojek, C., & Sullivan, A. M. (2006). Deviant leisure. *Leisure/Loisir*, 30(1), 3-5.
- Stephen, G., Erin D., Tim R., & Melanie, R. (2016). *The State of Homelessness in Canada 2016*. Toronto: Canadian Observatory on Homelessness.
- Sterritt, S. (2018). *Downtown Nanaimo 'eyesore' to become bright, vibrant outdoor art gallery*. Nanaimo News Now. <https://nanaimonewsnow.com/2018/04/09/downtown-nanaimo-eyesore-to-become-bright-vibrant-outdoor-art-gallery/>
- Sterritt, S. (2019). *Nanaimo's housing crisis, one year after discontent city closed*. Nanaimo News Now. <https://nanaimonewsnow.com/2019/12/09/nanaimos-housing-crisis-one-year-after-discontent-city-closed/>

- Sylvestre, J., Kerman, N., Polillo, A., Lee, C. M., Aubry, T., & Czechowski, K. (2018). A Qualitative Study of the Pathways into and Impacts of Family Homelessness. *Journal of Family Issues, 39*(8), 2265-2285.
- Synoground, G., & Bruya, M. A. (2000). Meeting the health needs of homeless or low-income persons: role of the nurse practitioner. *Clinical Excellence for Nurse Practitioners: The International Journal of NPACE, 4*(3), 138-144.
- Taylor, M. G., & Lynch, S. M. (2004). Trajectories of impairment, social support, and depressive symptoms in later life. *The Journals of Gerontology Series B: Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences, 59*(4), 238-245.
- Teh, J. K., & Tey, N. P. (2019). Effects of selected leisure activities on preventing loneliness among older Chinese. *SSM-population Health, 9*, 1-8.
- The GOVBC. (2019). *Together BC: British Columbia's Poverty Reduction Strategy*. Province of British Columbia. <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/british-columbians-our-governments/initiatives-plans-strategies/poverty-reduction-strategy/togetherbc.pdf>
- The RDN. (2019). *Emergency shelter*. <https://www.rdn.bc.ca/emergency-shelter>
- Thibeault, R. (2011). *Occupational gifts*. In M. McColl (Ed.), *Spirituality and occupational therapy* (pp. 111–120). CAOT Publications ACE.
- Thrasher, S. P., & Mowbray, C. T. (1995). A strengths perspective: An ethnographic study of homeless women with children. *Health & Social Work, 20*(2), 93-101.
- Tinsley, H.E., Barrett, T.C., & Kass, R.A. (1977). Leisure activities and need satisfaction. *Journal of Leisure Research, 9*(2), 110-120.
- Tirone, S. (2004). "Evening the playing field": Recreation in a low-income Canadian community. *Leisure/Loisir, 28*(1-2), 155-174.

- Tracy, S. J. (2010). Qualitative quality: Eight “big-tent” criteria for excellent qualitative research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 16(10), 837-851.
- Trussell, D., & Mair, H. (2010). Seeking judgement free spaces: Poverty, leisure and social inclusion. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 42(4), 513-533.
- Tryssenaar, J., Jones, E. J., & Lee, D. (1999). Occupational performance needs of a shelter population. *Canadian Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 66(4), 188-196.
- Tyler, K. A., & Schmitz, R. M. (2013). Family histories and multiple transitions among homeless young adults. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 35(10), 1719-1726.
- UNSC. (2017). *Global indicator framework for the Sustainable Development Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. UN Resolution A.
- United Nations. (2015). *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. Sustainable Development knowledge platform.  
<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>
- Voltage Control. (2019). *5 steps of the design thinking process: A step-by-step guide*. Voltage Control. <https://voltagecontrol.com/blog/5-steps-of-the-design-thinking-process-a-step-by-step-guide/>
- Walker, G. J., Kleiber, D. A., & Mannell, R. C. (2019). *A social psychology of leisure*. Sagamore-Venture Publishing LLC.
- Walsh, C., Beamer, K., Alexander, C., Shier, M., Loates, M., & Graham, J. (2010). Listening to the silenced: Informing homeless shelter design for women through investigation of site, situation, and service. *Social Development Issues*, 32(3), 35-49.
- Wardhaugh, J. (1999). The unaccommodated woman: Home, homelessness and identity. *The Sociological Review*, 47(1), 91-109.

- Watson, J. (2016). Gender-based violence and young homeless women: Femininity, embodiment and vicarious physical capital. *The Sociological Review*, 64(2), 256-273.
- Weare, K. (2000). *Promoting mental, emotional, and social health: A whole school approach*. Psychology Press.
- Webb, N.M. (1980). An analysis of group interaction and mathematical errors in heterogeneous ability groups. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 50(3), 266-276.
- Wenzel, S. L., Leake, B. D., & Gelberg, L. (2001). Risk factors for major violence among homeless women. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 16(8), 739-752.
- Wenzel, S. L., Tucker, J. S., Elliott, M. N., Marshall, G. N., & Williamson, S. L. (2004). Physical violence against impoverished women: A longitudinal analysis of risk and protective factors. *Women's Health Issues*, 14(5), 144-154.
- Weybright, E. H., Caldwell, L. L., Ram, N., Smith, E. A., & Wegner, L. (2015). Boredom prone or nothing to do? Distinguishing between state and trait leisure boredom and its association with substance use in South African adolescents. *Leisure Sciences*, 37(4), 311-331.
- Weybright, E. H., Caldwell, L. L., Ram, N., Smith, E. A., & Wegner, L. (2016). Trajectories of adolescent substance use development and the influence of healthy leisure: A growth mixture modeling approach. *Journal of Adolescence*, 49, 158-169.
- White, B. M., & Newman, S. D. (2015). Access to primary care services among the homeless: a synthesis of the literature using the equity of access to medical care framework. *Journal of Primary Care & Community Health*, 6(2), 77-87.
- Williams, D. J., & Walker, G. J. (2006). Leisure, deviant leisure, and crime: "Caution: Objects may be closer than they appear". *Leisure/Loisir*, 30(1), 193-218.

- Wilson, C. (2020). *Camping rules for homeless in parks laid down in Nanaimo Regional District*. Times Colonist. <https://www.vancourier.com/2.2065/camping-rules-for-homeless-in-parks-laid-down-in-nanaimo-regional-district-1.24085318>
- Wise, R. A. (2004). Dopamine, learning and motivation. *Nature Reviews Neuroscience*, 5(6), 483-494.
- Witt, P. A., & Ellis, G. D. (1985). Development of a short form to assess perceived freedom in leisure. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 17(3), 225-233.
- Wolfe, R. A., & Riddick, C. C. (1984). Effects of leisure counseling on adult psychiatric outpatients. *Therapeutic Recreation Journal*, 18(3), 30-37.
- Wright, N. M. J., Tompkins C. N. E., & Jones L. (2005). Exploring risk perception and behaviour of homeless injecting drug users diagnosed with hepatitis C. *Health and Social Care in the Community* 13(1), 75-83.
- Wright, J. D., Rubin, B. A., & Devine, J. A. (1998). *Beside the golden door: Policy, politics, and the homeless*. Aldine de Gruyter.
- Wrightsman, L. S. (1991). Interpersonal trust and attitudes toward human nature. In J. P. Robinson, P. R. Shaver, & L. S. Wrightsman (Eds.), *Measures of personality and social psychological attitudes* (p. 373–412). Academic Press.
- Young, I. (1990). *Justice and the Politics of Difference*. Princeton University Press.
- Zilanawala, A. (2016). Women's time poverty and family structure: Differences by parenthood and employment. *Journal of Family Issues*, 37(3), 369-392.
- Zukin, S. (1995). *The cultures of cities*. Blackwell.

## **Appendix A: Photo Voice Instrument**

[Prepared by Sharon Kelly and Garrett Stone]

The purpose of photovoice in this project is to use photographic evidence and symbolic representations to help others see the world through the eyes of the residents of Samaritan's House. Specifically, Samaritan House residents will use images to tell their story about ways to support wellbeing through leisure and faith-based experiences and environments.

The information collected may be used by decision-makers at ICCS to make changes to policies, programs, and possibly physical assets to help improve the wellbeing of Samaritan House residents.

### **Aim of the Photo-Voice**

To increase understanding of leisure and faith-based programs and interventions Samaritan's house can provide to help support residents' wellbeing.

### **Goals**

- Identify the leisure and faith-based needs and preferences of residents
- Secure insights into the residents' current perceptions of their wellbeing
- Secure insights into the residents' current perceptions of what Samaritan House staff could do to improve residents' wellbeing through leisure and faith-based programs or partnerships.
- Improve services and address residents' needs in line with their perspectives and voiced needs.

### **Protocol**

1. Recruit photovoice participants from pool of Samaritan's House residents who will foreseeably be available for the whole process (i.e., pre-photovoice interview, gathering of images, post-photovoice interview). Tools to recruit include posters, intake forms, Friday Meeting, 1:1 invitations.
2. Introduce participants to the photovoice methodology and facilitate a discussion on cameras, power, and ethics. Specifically, remind participants that they may take photographs that include third parties; however, formal, written consent will be required from anyone whose face is discernible in the image (<https://www2.viu.ca/universityrelations/pdf/Waiver.pdf>)
3. Obtain informed consent.
4. Distribute cameras to participants and review how to use the camera by explaining the following:
  - a. the basics of photography and photos, and
  - b. how to use a camera by watching, discussing and using the camera
5. Provide time for participants to take pictures.
  - a. Take pictures of actions, activities, places and things that satisfy or support their leisure/faith/spiritual/social/intellectual/emotional/physical needs and wellbeing.

- b. Take pictures of activities, places and things they believe DO NOT satisfy or support their needs and wellbeing.
6. Meet with photographers individually to get them to “caption” and explain their photos.
7. Plan with participants a format to share photographs and stories with policy makers or community leaders from ICCS. (Wang, 2006, p 149-152).

### **Follow up Questions with the Participants**

What does this photo mean to you?

What caption would you give it? Why?

What do you notice about the pictures?

What types of themes or activities are here?

In what ways does the picture capture your leisure or faith-based needs and preferences?

What other activities or experiences come to mind when you look at these pictures?

What drawings/words/scribbles/ideas do these pictures invite you to add to the mix?

Which ones might you want to add to your life? Or: What is a good recipe for wellbeing in your life?

## **Appendix B: Photo Elicitation Instrument**

[Prepared by Sharon Kelly and Garrett Stone]

The purpose of photo elicitation in this project is to use images to stimulate discussion amongst Samaritan House residents regarding leisure and faith-based experiences and environments that support wellbeing.

The information collected may be used so that decision-makers at ICCS can make changes to policies, programs and possibly physical assets to help improve the wellbeing of the Samaritan House residents.

### **Goals**

- Identify the leisure and faith-based needs and preferences of residents
- Secure insights into the residents' current perceptions of their wellbeing
- Secure insights into the residents' current perceptions of what Samaritan House staff could do to improve residents' wellbeing through leisure and faith-based programs or partnerships.
- Improve services and address residents' needs in line with their perspectives and voiced needs.

### **Protocol**

1. Recruit a group of photovoice participants from Samaritan's House residents. Tools to recruit include posters, intake forms, Friday Meeting, 1:1 invitation, photovoice participants.
2. Obtain informed consent.
3. Present Positive Actions for Wellbeing cards (examples below), or similar cards, and ask:
  - a. What do the words leisure, faith, and wellbeing mean to you? Look like to you?
  - b. Which images, words, or symbols printed on these cards do you like the most? Or which images, words, or symbols on the printed cards represent faith/leisure/well-being for you? Why? (Select top 3-5)
  - c. What actions identified on the cards are you using/ have you used in the past to support your wellbeing/faith/leisure?
    - i. How do/did these actions make you feel?
    - ii. Have you noticed any changes in yourself when you implement them?
    - iii. If so, what were they?
    - iv. Would you like to continue or re/start any of these actions?
    - v. If so, which ones, why and how?
  - d. What do you notice about the pictures? What types of themes or activities are here?
  - e. What other activities or experiences come to mind when you look at these pictures? What drawings/words/scribbles/ideas do these pictures invite you to add to the mix? What is missing?

- f. Which ones might you want to add to your life? Or: What is a good recipe for wellbeing in your life?
4. Summarize and review findings. Generate a vision statement from what was discussed:
  - a. Word cloud or poster – a visual representation of words and/or images describing how participants would like to see faith and leisure supported at Samaritan House.
  - b. Poem
  - c. Drawing – of how participants would like to see their wellbeing improved through leisure and faith-based experiences and environments
  - d. Skit – demonstrating how they envision their leisure and faith being expressed more fully
5. Plan with participants a format to share their vision with policy makers or community leaders from ICCS.

### Sample Positive Action Cards



## Appendix C: Recruitment Poster

[Prepared by Sharon Kelly and Garrett Stone]



VANCOUVER ISLAND  
UNIVERSITY

WHAT SPARKS JOY FOR YOU?

HOW DO YOU EXPERIENCE FAITH AND LEISURE?

WE WANT TO KNOW!

We are looking for volunteers to help us understand and improve leisure and faith-based programs and services for  
**Samaritan House residents – that's you!**

As a participant in this study, you would be asked to participate in either or both of the following activities:

1. Take a disposable camera around town and capture images that represent what leisure, faith, and wellbeing mean to you!  
And/or
2. Participate in a group discussion about leisure, faith, and wellbeing.

Your participation would involve (2-3) sessions, each of which is approximately (60-90) minutes plus whatever time you take to gather photos.

Light refreshments will be provided before collecting photos and during the group discussion.

For more information about this study, or to volunteer for this study, please contact:

*Sharon Kelly, Sharon.Kelly@viu.ca,  
Garrett Stone, Garrett.Stone@viu.ca,  
or a Samaritan House Staff*

**This study has been reviewed by and received ethics clearance through a Vancouver Island University Research Ethics Committee.**

## **Appendix D: List of Counselling Service Providers\***

[Prepared by Sharon Kelly and Garrett Stone]

### **BC's MENTAL HEALTH & SUBSTANCE USE ONLINE RESOURCE:**

[www.heretohelp.bc.ca](http://www.heretohelp.bc.ca)

Information on mental health, mental disorders, and substance use/abuse for individuals, families, and the community.

### **CANADIAN MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION: MID-ISLAND BRANCH**

437 Wesley Street

Nanaimo, BC V9R 2T8

Ph. 250-244-4042

Email: [info.midisland@cmha.bc.ca](mailto:info.midisland@cmha.bc.ca)

Website: [www.mid-island.cmha.bc.ca](http://www.mid-island.cmha.bc.ca)

### **COMMUNITY OUTREACH RESPONSE (COR)**

Mobile Crisis Response service available 7 days per week

To access call the Vancouver Island Crisis Line 1-888-494-3888

### **HAVEN SOCIETY WOMEN'S COUNSELLING**

[www.havensociety.com](http://www.havensociety.com) 250-756-2452

Provides individual and group counselling, or women who are experiencing physical, sexual and/or psychological violence in their lives. Workshops include "Strategies for Empowerment" for women who have experienced abuse or assault.

### **ISLAND INTEGRATED COUNSELLING SOCIETY**

[www.islandintegratedcounselling.com](http://www.islandintegratedcounselling.com) 250-716-8888

302—285 Prideaux Street

A non-profit society whose goals are to assist persons to improve their relationships and meaning through private sessions, groups, workshops, mediation and other means. Fees are based according to ability to pay.

## MENTAL HEALTH & SUBSTANCE USE SERVICES WALK-IN CRISIS COUNSELLING CLINIC

Island Health's Crisis Counselling Services: 203-2000 Island Highway (behind Staples at Brooks Landing) Monday – Friday, 10 am – 7 pm. They provide immediate, single session therapy with a focus on in-the-moment crisis. Grounding and stabilization after a traumatic event is the priority. Clients can access the clinic as often as they wish (daily) for an indefinite period of time.

Island Health's Substance Use Walk-In Services: 3151 Barons Road, Monday, 9.30 am – 12 pm and Wednesday, 1 pm – 3.30 pm. They provide immediate service for clients struggling with substances

## MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT LINE

[www.heretohelp.bc.ca](http://www.heretohelp.bc.ca) 310-6789

The Vancouver Island Crisis Society also answers the provincial 310Mental Health Support 24/7/365 to provide empowering emotional support, information on appropriate resources and a wide range of support relating to mental health concerns.

## NANAIMO WOMEN'S SHELTER

“Support Services provides both essential and basic services for women. Support workers and volunteers are on site to provide support and resource guidance for participants. The NWC is open from 10am-3pm from Tuesday to Friday. Walk-in individual appointments are limited but we do offer scheduled drop-in hours twice a week. Please call 250-753-0633 to make an appointment with a Client Support or Tenancy Support Worker.”

<https://www.nanaimowomen.com>

## SELBY STREET MISSION

Drop in at 461 Selby Street for conversation, coffee and refreshments, clothes closet, prayer support and Tuesday night dinner and bible study.

## VANCOUVER ISLAND CRISIS SOCIETY

[www.vicrisis.ca](http://www.vicrisis.ca) Administration 250-753-2495

[www.vicrisis.ca/community-resource-database/](http://www.vicrisis.ca/community-resource-database/)

Individuals can access 24/7 support through the Vancouver Island Crisis Line at 1-888-494-3888, or text: 250-800-3806.

