# Sustainability, Youth And Leisure

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Introduction

Much has been said about environmental and economic sustainability but very little about human and ecological unsustainability. Undoubtedly, from the human point of view, our present and future are highly disturbing, immersed in a situation of global crisis and increasing planetary emergency. Therefore, as a thesis for this text, a radical paradigmatic transformation is proposed. Once we understand this, profound socio-cultural changes will be needed to address the basic epistemological, ontological, political, economic, educational, and even existential and spiritual needs of today's societies and lifestyles.

In order to understand how dangerous the current social model is, it is enough to note that modern societies are increasingly globalized while exploiting natural resources and increasing the levels of environmental pollution. Both these factors disregard thresholds, rhythm, and times of natural regeneration and assimilation, thus bringing real risk to the survival of our human species and the various living beings on the planet. At present, pollution and ecological and environmental degradation do not delineate borders that affect the planet as a whole.

Examples such as acid rain, the greenhouse effect, the reduction and destruction of the ozone layer, global warming up to the already well known "climate change" are symptoms of global problems. If we add to these the increasing loss of biodiversity, desertification, and soil erosion, coupled with the growing problem of access to water and water pollution, we can see clear examples of the current paradoxes and contradictions between modernity and its desired progress.

Among the multiple possible causes, the first thing that stands out is the dominant economic paradigm that focuses on economic growth at any cost, stimulating accumulation and greed. In addition, we see the uncontrolled use of fossil fuels, which facilitates this excessive growth and is worsened with the promotion of consumerism as a supposed route to human happiness and well-being. Moreover, it proves the existence of a giant financial bubble that grew to 50 times the size of the real economy of worldwide trade in goods and services. At the same time, the destruction of traditional cultures continues in order to impose hegemonic industrial and urban economic models, with the consequent loss of worldviews, languages, values, and knowledge other than the dominant culture.
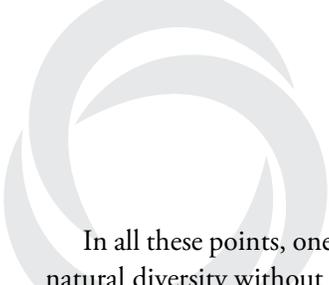
In all these points, one perceives the lack of consideration and value given to human and natural diversity without paying attention to planetary limits. Due to these unprecedented dangers to the environment, human societies are clearly showing a situation of global unsustainability.

As the current unsustainability has a human origin, the present article attempts to find alternative futures. Thus, the analysis of unsustainability will stress the urgency of creating a profound and revolutionary cultural transformation. The proposal to discover some possible alternatives to change this environmental and social unsustainability is linked to youth and leisure, as they are recognized as potential contributors to the desired social transformation.

Youth is therefore proposed as a socio-cultural category, which, beyond its own paradoxes and potential contradictions, may contribute to the openness necessary for finding other ways of life committed to the common good and the construction of alternative futures. Similarly, it is postulated that leisure, even undervalued and often presented with alienating features, may have other transformational features that enable open pathways to ecological and human sustainability.

Exponential growth in a finite world: the impossibility theorem and the path to unsustainability

The paper "the limits to growth of the beginning of the 70´s," which the Club of Rome commissioned to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (Meadows *et al*, 1972), argued against the theory of unlimited growth. The conclusion was that humanity is destroying the ecological equilibrium and, if this continues it will lead to an extreme situation within a hundred years.

Twenty years later, the same writers, in the paper "beyond the limits to growth," assert that the changes are occurring too fast and the signs will appear later; as the inertia is great, the responses are too slow. They stress that the limits to growth in many areas has already been exceeded, so if the trend continues, its effects will be irreversible.

The world commission on environment and development (WCED, 1988) had already given a warning that we have very little time for corrective actions. In some cases, we may be near the threshold of critical transgression. At the same time, they point out that risks are increasing faster than our ability to control them.

In this sense, from a critical perspective, it is useful to clarify that this state of non-global sustainability is the result of human actions being carried out daily. This past and present behavior responds to the formation, consolidation, and deepening of an industrial and urbanized social model that is presented as hegemonic and is seeking homogeneity. This unique model of society considers economic growth its maximum bastion, which is

understood as the only way to welfare and the improvement in the quality of human life. Undoubtedly, this is the central fallacy of the current capitalist system.

The idea of an untenable and unsustainable model of development is recent and has been a surprise to most people. Previously, there was a view in which nature was virtually unlimited and people could focus their attention on their own needs without worrying about the environmental and ecological consequences. From this critical perspective, growth cannot continue indefinitely in a finite world. In this sense, it is very important to differentiate the two and point out that sustainable development and tenable growth will never be synonyms (Elizalde 2008).

As stated by Daly (1991, 1997), growth is only the quantitative increase in physical scale, while development is a qualitative improvement, or the unfolding of potentialities. Therefore, as the human economy is a subsystem of a larger global ecosystem, which does not grow but develops, it is clear that economic growth is not sustainable or tenable over a long-lasting period. Growth refers to objects, while development refers to people (Elizalde 2003).

As pointed out above, the very practices of exponential growth of the economy are those that continue to deepen the current ecological-environmental crisis, and will thus impede the fulfillment of the promise of a good life for everyone by excluding a vast majority of human beings from current benefits and developments.

Therefore, although it is not openly acknowledged, there is some concern that what is proposed as a solution is precisely the origin of and the principal reason for this planetary emergency and global crisis: the over-exploitation of natural resources to sustain the hyper-consumerist model, which, implicitly, in a structural way, proposes social exclusion to maintain its possibility.

To measure the severity of the existing inequity and level of social injustice, we need only to remember that according to the figures from the United Nations' food and agriculture organization (FAO) and the world food program (WFP)[1] about 1,000 million people go hungry every day, while the richest man in the world, according to Forbes magazine,[2] now has a personal fortune of more than 74 billion dollars. All this takes part in Latin America, the region with the largest income inequality, according to the World Bank, where the combined wealth of these millionaires has risen 18 per cent since 2007.

Parallel to this severe structural injustice, true social pandemics occur, such as the loss of cultural diversity, a product of the neo-liberal globalization, which in many cases results in cultural homogenization. At the same time, there is a worrying level of consumerism,

1 http://www.fao.org/news/story/es/item/45291/icode/
2 http://www.forbes.com/wealth/billionaires#p_1_s_arank_-1__-1

in its different ways linked to the over-indebtedness of the population in search of more and more, as well as other ambiguities and paradoxes, among which are countless diseases caused by modern lifestyles, such as obesity, anorexia and bulimia, malnutrition, stress, and depression. Other problems are individualism and political apathy, and the various forms of consumerism not limited to alcoholism, drug addiction or drug abuse.

Against this background, there is no doubt that profound changes are needed, especially in people's minds and in perceptions of what is important, but also in habits and behavior, which means a transformation of current disposable and consumerist lifestyles.

Thus, in this new context of global cultural and planetary crisis, a new paradigm will be required to address the challenges of today and tomorrow. What we need to understand first is that what is at stake is the survival of our human culture and the various forms of life on the planet that sustains our existence as a species.

Conceived in this way, our responsibility consists of awakening the seeds of a new ethic that should be translated into real actions and behavior. This ecological-environmental-human ethics will have to include society as a whole if intend to make the urgent changes required.

Hence the importance of recognizing that only with others, and all together, will it be possible to build a different social reality, one that will make possible a new relationship between man-technology-nature. That is why a central and necessary element of development is the recovery and reassessment of solidarity as the core of this new action and reaction. Solidarity between generations (between humans of the present), intergenerational solidarity (with future humans) and solidarity with nature and life understood as an expression of the infinity of the universe (Elizalde, 2008a)

Sketches of a paradigm shift: Identifying some false beliefs

Since the current crisis is a product of false beliefs that result in certain forms of production and consumption, a profound paradigm shift is indispensable. It will be necessary for this purpose to eliminate myths and beliefs widely rooted in hegemonic and dominant western thought.

• Some of these myths and beliefs can be summarized in the following (Elizalde, 2008):

• Belief in the existence of an unlimited planetary nature, resulting in the failure to consider or respect the limits of nature.

• Belief in nature as an object of use, resulting in an excessive anthropocentrism.

• Belief in the existence of an ideal civilization, resulting in the naturalization and universalization of modernity and development of the western ideal, which is expressed

in the belief of a single development, social market, neo-liberal capitalist model, as if there were no other possible alternatives.

• Belief in western science, as if it were the absolute and highest truth, resulting in the incorporation of external technologies that will not necessarily be appropriate for specific local realities. the model disregards all other indigenous, folk, community, spiritual knowledge, understanding them as invalid and lax.

• Belief that more equals better. In other words, economic growth is always good and positive, which leads to the overexploitation of resources and excessive pollution, disregarding natural boundaries.

• Belief in the ability of human technology to transform and control all natural processes and reverse their side effects.

• Belief in ongoing social and human progress as a real fact, therefore being unable for the self-criticism needed to obtain the radical change required.

The whole universe is dynamic and is constantly changing. Nothing is static, and the force of what is new is opening new paths to the uncertain and unpredictable that inevitably will arise. Although we do not notice it, the tension between past and new opposing forces of continuity and otherness is in constant conflict until finally there is an urgent transformation and alteration of the previous existing order.

Something similar occurs in the case of human beings, and we can see clearly in the course of history where entire cultures and societies have collapsed, but in turn there have been unintended changes that have often allowed the survival of that particular culture and the development of humanity as a whole (Diamond, 2006).

To maintain the existing order, it seems to be that there is a strong human tendency to be dependent on the known, the past, on certainty and on all that is commonly present in the security of the old. In many cases, if changes are accepted, these are only regarded as a continuation of the past, but not as a radical break with the past, which in our current human situation may be due to security, fear, and inertia, but mainly to a short-term lack of awareness and self-interest. The important thing to know is that if there have been some cultures in the history of mankind that were able to see the need and urgency to transform their lifestyles, as shown by Diamond (2006). They were open to innovation, finding ways to incorporate the significant changes that allowed their "evolution" and the survival of their society to overcome death and cultural collapse.

Thus, the world is to satisfy all human needs but not all desires; that is sufficient, something often forget by adults, leaders, and experts because they are so busy producing,

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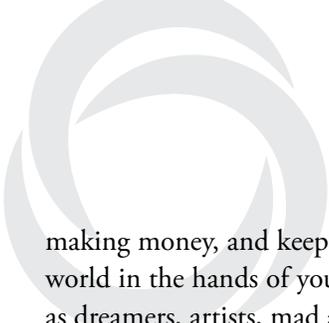
making money, and keeping the system operating, leaving the responsibility to change the world in the hands of young people and all those who have time to devote to leisure, such as dreamers, artists, mad and creative people. That will be the next point to be discussed.

Youth and leisure: opening up ways to social transformation

When talking about a paradigm shift, it is necessary to clarify that such a social transformation would mean all the possible paths that lead to new ways of relating to ourselves, to others, and to nature in a respectful, friendly, and supportive way. In turn, it is important to note that the creative act gives the opportunity to analyze, question, and problematize, and from that point on to attempt to rebuild reality. So the creative act opens the possibility of dreaming of, designing, and implementing actions in the direction of a new reality. Are not these some of the elements in the social imaginary attributed to the nature that surrounds the spirit of youth?

It is known that in many cases the collective behavior of young people has had significant effects on the culture of societies and on their customs and transformations of values. It is common to see youth movements taking up counter-cultural and revolutionary ways in moral, social, and even political aspects, questioning openly and actively the values defended by previous generations, which give rise to well-known intergenerational conflict.

But what is meant by youth? What does it mean to be young? Who is young, only those within a certain age range? Youth is more than a period from adolescence to adulthood; it is much more than one age range. Youth is a social construction from which society invents a new social category. It should be remembered that only since the rise of European capitalist bourgeoisie, in the middle of the nineteenth century, is when a new kind of subject, young people, become visible. They do not necessarily have to immediately take charge of finding the means for their own personal and family survival. All this could wait while they prepare themselves through education to later meet its obligations in the adult world. In that way, the notion that we know today as youth was developed.

In the case of Latin America, it will be necessary to wait almost until the late 1960s and early 1970s for this category to be extended to young subjects, because until that time, youth—as a social category—referred solely to the profile of a college student. Thanks to the massification of basic education and its later expansion to secondary education, together with massification of the media, especially radio and later television, it became possible to start talking about young people as a broad social category (Silva, 2002).

Therefore, young people can usually be seen in an idealized way as transforming, problematical, questioning, and non-conformist. This claims that young people, like no other social agents, in their search for identity and with one of its characteristics, will carry

with them the potential and possibilities – tools, responsibilities and commitments—to make social changes. Is this entirely true?

From a complex perspective, it is considered more appropriate to speak of youths. There is no single or a unique type of young man or woman, but rather, a variety of human beings with their own individual and unique characteristics. Some young people are extremely critical, but, on the other hand, there are others who do not question anything and behave almost like obedient sheep in a herd, obeying the orders of the system and acting as its reproducer.

In turn, perhaps as a defense mechanism created by a society dominated by adults, young people's values, ideas, and initiatives are undervalued because they are considered immature, flippant, irresponsible and more recently, disengaged, frivolous, hedonistic, individualist, consumerist, alienated, and so on. It is as if all the society's ills were transferred to young people. But at the same time, in a paradoxical way, the responsibility for building a new future and changing the world is transferred to them.

Typical are phrases like: "you are the hope of society", "you are the adults of tomorrow," "you are the builders of the future." But these phrases are not translated into power and decision-making positions, or in possibilities of exercising transformative leadership. In this way, all adults are making efforts to run the world, but do not have the time to deal with utopias or face the current challenges and continue the momentum toward the accepted, allowed, and known. The world does not change although everybody accepts the undeniable need for change.

Since youth is not only confined to young individuals, we know that there many people in that age range that definitely are not open to the new, having no ability to criticize and for whom the world is running fairly well and without problems. These people, young in age but conservatives in attitudes, are not open to questioning the current social order and thus providing the needed changes to build another social reality in accordance with the present challenges. That is why it is suggested that youth is much more than a matter of age; a central issue is an attitude of openness to the new and to transformation.

We can say that youth is ambiguous, contradictory, and ambivalent if we consider it in a broader way and as a social category. In showing this contrast, it is known that there are many human beings who are constantly looking for individual and collective evolution, who are open to learn something new and dream of a needed and urgent global paradigm shift. These are people of all ages and their ideas are "young," recognizing their state of incompleteness as human beings and the continuous process of personal transformation. Therefore, understanding youth as a social category is not only a reality that can also signify an important metaphor for the ideas expressed here, considering in particular the symbolic
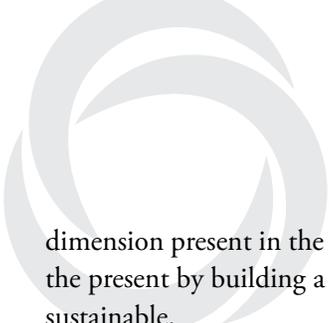
dimension present in the momentum of youth towards the paradigmatic transformation of the present by building a new future, changing the world, and making it more human and sustainable.

And what does leisure have to do with all this?

Trying to overcome limited perspectives and to identify some of the potential contributions that leisure can also make to this needed paradigm shift, there is still much to discover. In this sense, leisure can generate an openness to experience marked by an attitude that breaks with and violates what is permitted and supposedly legitimate, often appearing on the edge of what is socially accepted and seen as adequate. One of the great fears is due to that notion, as well as the dangers that leisure represents in maintaining the status quo. Here comes, in part, the attempt to stifle and to ban the disruptive, the countercurrent, otherness, and subversive innovation: everything that can express creative, chaotic, and transformational leisure.

It is good to say that the revolutionaries and the "crazy ones," in the sense of those who dare to have other world and reality views, have always been out of order, whether excluded, detained or punished, because in many cases they are the ones who cause some of the significant social and cultural changes experienced by all of society (Elizalde 2010).

Leisure may enable the development of a new identity, a more authentic and more inclusive sense of belonging, enabling the creation of a sense of freedom, self-recognition, and openness to personal and social transformation. Are not these characteristics similar to the processing of youth, according to the metaphor mentioned above?

In this sense, to talk of leisure from a transformational perspective, it is necessary to overcome the usual view about it, especially in the Latin American context, since in many cases the ways of understanding leisure are full of biases and distortions. Through these biases, leisure experiences are seen as a vice and hence, presumably, need to be moralized (Requixa, 1977). Considering the work ethic as the highest good, leisure is rejected because it represents a potential threat to the "spirit"-based model of capitalist production (Elizalde and Gomes, 2010). Consequently, leisure is generally trivialized, undervalued, and full of negative connotations.

Paradoxically, the concept of leisure is increasingly becoming a relatively positive view, not only identified as rest, holidays, and fun, and understood in a limited way as the opposite of work or as something detrimental to the progress of societies. The way to understand and experience leisure is expanding significantly as it is considered a necessary and useful human experience, capable of offering self-realization, since it is a dimension of culture that enables personal and social change and the emergence of creative experience. With leisure understood as a fundamental human need and right,

it is known that its proper satisfaction can contribute to the quality of life of those who experience it.

Therefore, compared to the state of global crisis, daring to imagine other unknown and different worlds, other possible worlds is required so that dreaming of alternative futures becomes possible. This will require developing an active attitude of curiosity and openness to innovation and change, elements that may enhance leisure experiences. This means that with leisure as a freely chosen time/space, it may represent one of the many alternatives required to move from this old paradigm of society to a new, emerging, unknown and necessary one.

By contrast, and in such a way so as not to fall into idealizing while analyzing the relationship of leisure, youth, and society, the ideologies that sustain these links must be determined. Both youth and leisure can be a space for freedom and dignity of the human condition, but, if they are opposed, they can also be a way to reinforce injustice, social oppression, and alienation.

Youth and leisure can therefore be quite conservative in the search for maintaining the current "order" and can be instruments of social domination, or, inversely, they can be a decisive contribution to cultural transformation of the current, unsustainable socio-cultural model. So, paradoxically, recognizing this ambiguity and the opposition raised, it can be seen that leisure, like youth, may show a conservative character in the sense of helping to maintain the unfair social order, while at the same time may contain aspects that have a transformational character.

This point is emphasized by the need to promote a critical/creative education by and for leisure and consider its dual educative aspect both as a vehicle and an object of education (Requixa, 1977; Parker, 1978; Marcellino, 1987), since it is a transformational learning tool that may increase the possibilities for reflection about the society in which we live, including its contradictions and tensions. It is in this sense that leisure, as a potential contribution to transformational learning (Elizalde, 2010) can:

• Be a productive field of new individual and collective knowledge.

• Offer the possibility of a new way of enjoying time, expanding human capacity to make choices about what affects us and to dream of different worlds.

• Facilitate the thought of a different life (individual and collective), meaningful, open to otherness and change.

• Provide a new form of access to a higher quality of life.

• Provide the ability to critically rethink contemporary societies and the place of human beings within them.

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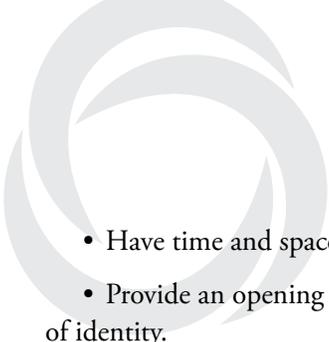
• Have time and space for the re-humanization of the individual and collective life.

• Provide an opening to the creative process, to the search for freedom, and to creation of identity.

• Open a potentially new way of experiencing education and work.

• Give time and space to meet with ourselves and with each other, accepting ourselves and others.

• Offer the possibility of creating and building alternatives to the current model on the way to sustainable, participative societies that are capable of solidarity.

Making sense of our transcendent existence is something that fills the souls of human beings of all ages, not only young ones, with happiness and joy. For these reasons, it is thought that leisure can potentially be a decisive element in the change as a human species.

This is a challenge that, if it is not met, will bring about times of great suffering, ecological and human collapse.

It ought to be made clear that leisure should not be understood from a messianic point of view, thought of as an element that will solve all current social problems. The mistake must not be made of imposing on leisure and youth the responsibility of changing the world and creating alternatives for an unsustainable model. In fact, leisure could be one of many elements that when experienced differently may possibly bring about, at least partially, the necessary changes that the present time of man requires.

Sustainable Societies: the contributions of leisure

Globally, we are moving from era of certainty to one of uncertainty, which no longer believes in absolute truths, as shown by Morin (1988). Western science, then, is not opening up to other, undervalued kinds of human knowledge. This is the case of all ancient oriental knowledge and the various forms of indigenous knowledge that include many popular kinds of knowledge created by young dreamers of all ages.

From a social point of view, we are advancing almost like a ship without a rudder, transforming our planetary home and societies into a veritable Titanic, ready to sink into the abyss of unsustainable collapse. With this uncertainty and purpose of unreliable models, it becomes an urgent need to remake, create and re-create our dreams, desires and common utopias, like looking to find constellations to guide our passage in this night of transformation.

While seeking alternatives to the current social system, we might consider that leisure

can be a form of protest and rebellion, expressing outrage and dissent against an economic, political, and cultural model that is intended to be superior, universal, and valid for all societies. This will mean daring not to accept the globalized neo-liberal ideal as the only model for society, not to accept the attempt to homogenize all societies in the world with this supposedly superior model. It means daring to recognize the importance of rescuing and assessing human cultural diversity. All of these topics will become central when it is discovered that the application of this hegemonic model is one of the main causes of the current global crisis.

The crisis, as stated above, is shown both at environmental and ecological levels, but also in its human and social dimensions, with clear signs of unsustainability. Therefore, leisure linked to the metaphor of transforming youth beyond its paradoxes and ambiguities may represent one of the many alternatives required to move from the old to the new, alternative, and different needed to build.

In this sense, while ambiguity, contradiction and ambivalence are being recognized, leisure as a transformational learning capability can change the inherent logic of a consumer model of over-exploitation and waste, concentration of wealth, and social exclusion by allowing a critical view of social reality and an alternative perspective to the current unsustainable lifestyle. This would be encouraging a potential shift against the existing social model, and confronting the trend of blind consumerism and evasion by connecting the human subject with his own being and his social and historical context. So key questions arise in the wake of such consciousness: Who am I? What do I do with my life? What is the kind of society we want to live in? These questions become transcendent and begin to take effect in that individual and the social subject that breaks with his passivity and becomes open to choices about what affects him actively and about the ways to meet his wishes and desires. This venture will provide an opportunity to experience leisure with a counter-hegemonic, alternative, questioning, and creative attitude.

The way that leisure is being experienced may provide some clues about the types of current societies and the possible ways to transform their own individuals. Leisure will then be the element through which we can potentially reflect on the society in which we live, its groups, ways of organizing time/space, styles of sociability, and its many conflicts.

Thus, with leisure considered as a support for multiple meanings, it can provide a path to understanding the limits and possibilities that are being introduced into our reality (Magnani, 2000). In sum, considering leisure as a multidimensional phenomenon with its own peculiarities allows society to think about it, to reflect on its broader issues closely linked to other spheres of social life.

Thus, leisure is a dimension of culture characterized by the playful experience of cultural events in the social time/space made up of these three elements: playfulness, cultural events,

and social time/space. These elements taken together make up the material, symbolic, subjective, and objective conditions that can—or cannot—make leisure a powerful ally in the process of transforming our societies, by making them more humane and inclusive (Gomes, 2010).

In this sense, leisure as a transformational learning ability can be recognized as a principle of building citizenship—both planetary and inclusive—regarded as the basic element for carrying out actions that seek social inclusion and participation, with a project of cultural transformation committed to the building of sustainable societies.

Something that may give us further clues are these questions about leisure: what is its transformational potential? What are those elements radically different from previous forms of understanding and living? What is involved in understanding leisure as a basic human need and how would it be experienced starting from its synergic satisfaction?[3]

On seeking to build synergies in the forms of satisfying the need for leisure, a new way of living in time, as something proper to itself, free, and won, could be experienced. This may seem rather simple and unimportant, but if we find that time and space are two of the basic existential human categories, it might be a significant leap to offer freedom and individual ability in the decision making process to every human being (Elizalde, 2010). In this sense, if every human being wanted to change the world, starting from him- or herself, it is very likely that the world would change. What if the majority of humans believe in the idea of creating another world that is more humane, generous and respectful of nature and life? What if you dare to dream of another, more caring society? And if your dream were an incorruptible certainty, an unlimited desire and will translated into effective and assertive action?

Final Considerations

Proposing the sustainability-youth-leisure relationship suggests an interesting trend towards progress, starting from the need for alternatives to build another possible world. Understanding that this will be specifically looked for, the humanization of societies today shows clear signs of structural inequity and ecological, environmental, social, and human unsustainability.

We know that the alienated and meaningless societies that ought to give significance to our lives are dead and inhuman worlds. From this perspective, transformational leisure can be one of the many innovative elements that help us to wonder why and how to do it, collaborating in building new social utopias, considering leisure a key element in the evolution of human societies and its individuals in the search for the desired sustainability.

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3 Synergy means the behavior of a complete system that is unpredictable from the behavior of any of its parts taken separately. In this sense, it connotes a form of synergistic potentiality, i.e. a process in which the power of the associated elements is greater than the combined power of the elements taken in isolation

This other way of understanding and experiencing leisure may therefore contribute to overcoming various existing prejudices about everything considered unproductive and uninteresting, or anything free, and to removing from leisure this negative charge that it still carries. With leisure understood in this way, it will convey new meanings to social life, new ethical and aesthetic principles whose aim will be overcome the dichotomy between duty and pleasure, work and enjoyment, study and play, the collective and the individual. At the same time it is regarded as a human right and a fundamental need, leisure will allow for the emergence of a critical, creative, and alternative perception of social and personal realities, offering the chance to generate new insights and perspectives from which we may understand it and exist in this world.

Transformational leisure may help to change many of the currently prevailing negative values, such as individualism, social fragmentation, self-referred and exacerbated hedonism, apathy, disinterest in others, the lack of solidarity, and the absence of critical thinking. This will enable each person's true self to be expressed freely and spontaneously so that conflicts will be addressed and not evaded or concealed, as happens today. Learning to deal with conflicts in an open, peaceful, and constructive way is to produce meaningful and lasting changes.

In fact, this is the main positive attribute of a global crisis like the present one, which allows us to make the overall changes that are urgently needed, which opens up the possibility of evolution and global transformation. It should be surely noted that changes in human societies do not occur alone; they take place because there are people who make them happen.

Thus, considering leisure as a possibility of transformational learning driven by the metaphor of youth identified in this article could help in finding innovative solutions to confront hyper-consumerism, alienation, and depersonalization, as well as low self-esteem and self-contempt, contempt for the local social context, and the loss of a more transcendent existential sense. All of these are symptoms of the current deep crisis that has as its base the loss of meaning.

Without trying to find answers to all the deep questions in the text and leaving them intentionally open now, it is proposed that this new leisure could reveal to us how to leave behind these nights of hopelessness, inertia, and apathy that have largely become our present as humanity. While linking sustainability, youth and leisure we aim to collaborate in creating the necessary changes in worldviews and paradigms in the search for societies and sustainable futures on the path to a new culture that arises from our needs.

Translation: Thomas Burns

English

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