

THERAPEUTIC RECREATION EVALUATION: PROBLEMS AND POSSIBILITIES

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HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

A glimpse into the past can provide important background perspectives relative to the current state of affairs in the evaluation field. Therapeutic recreation evaluators need to understand the historical and conceptual developments in evaluation in order to facilitate future improvements in evaluation methods, training, standards, and the procurement of administrative support to conduct quality and meaningful evaluation projects. Problems associated with the emerging field of evaluation will be discussed and possibilities for therapeutic recreation evaluation reform will be suggested in this chapter.

The documented history of program evaluation has been traced back through approximately the past two hundred years. Six main eras have been identified in the course of program evaluation development: 1) the Age of Reform (1800-1900); 2) the Age of Efficiency and Testing (1900-1930); 3) the Tylerian Age (1930-1945); 4) the Age of Innocence (1946-1957); 5) the Age of Expansion (1958-1972); and 6) the Age of Professionalization (1973 - present) (Madaus, Stufflebeam, & Scriven, 1983b, pp. 3-4). The advances and problems associated with each era as they relate to the evolution of the evaluation field are presented next.

With the advent of the Industrial Age and the accompanying changes in society (i.e., social, economic, technological) during the Age of Reform (1800-1900), early attempts at evaluation in the United States were made to determine the effectiveness of educational programs (Madaus et al., 1983b, pp. 4-6). An evaluation-related problem that occurred during this era was that data were in some cases used to meet select individual political ends. As an antecedent to therapeutic recreation, this time period reflects the custodial model; human services were scant or nonexistent and therefore there was no real program evaluation.

The Age of Efficiency and Testing (1900-1930) represents the opening decades of the twentieth century when systematization, standardization, and efficiency became prominent areas of concern. A problem that arose during this era included the use of so-called "objective" evaluation data for propaganda purposes as a means to shore up evidence to counter unfavorable tides of public opinion. Another problem associated with this era centered about the lack of generalizability of results due to evaluations having been methodologically limited to local programs (Madaus et al., 1983b, pp. 6-8).

The Tylerian Age (1930-1945) was notably influenced by Ralph Tyler, "the father of educational evaluation", who left his mark by expanding our perspectives concerning curriculum and evaluation. Tyler is credited with designating the term "educational evaluation", which he conceptualized as being the "comparison of intended outcomes with actual outcomes." Tyler's approach, which focused on measuring behavioral objectives and the degree to which they were realized, avoided the problems of subjectivity among evaluators associated with earlier approaches, and avoided disruptive procedures with subjects connected with experimental designs (Madaus et al., 1983b, pp. 8-9). Early forerunners of therapeutic recreation programs came under the influence of the Tylerian evaluation approach, as leaders realized that the more sophisticated and systematic our programs were, the more accountability they provided.

The next phase in the course of evaluation development took place during the Age of Innocence (1946-1957), which is characterized as a period when standardized tests and machine based scoring and analysis became prominent. During this testing movement, Ralph Tyler, among others, helped to establish the Educational

Testing Service (ETS) in 1947. Additionally, the American Psychological Association (APA) developed a manual, *Technical Recommendations for Psychological Tests and Diagnostic Techniques* (APA, 1954), to help regulate testing procedures within the profession. Tyler's earlier call for and emphasis on the need for the explicit stating of objectives lead to increased assistance (i.e., educational, taxonomy development) provided to educators and related professionals to improve their ability to write educational objectives (Madaus et al., 1983b, pp. 9-11; Bloom, Engelhart, Furst, Hill, & Krathwohl, 1956). While resource availability, data collecting, testing, and the technical aspects of evaluation expanded dramatically during this period, a problem was the lack of effort devoted to applying these technologies towards improving or developing quality programs. Evaluation projects still tended to be funded by private or local sources during this era. A major shift in primary funding support for evaluations, from private coffers to federal monies, marked the end of this era.

The launching of Sputnik in 1957 brought about the close of the Age of Innocence and precipitated the rise of the Age of Expansion (1958-1972) in evaluation. During this era, evaluation expanded into an industry and a profession supported by public monies. Cronbach (1963, Chap. 6) wrote a critical review of the state of evaluation at that time and pointed out the problem of the conceptual lack of relevance and usefulness of evaluations conducted during that time period, and the tendency to do post hoc evaluations using comparisons of norm-referenced test scores from experimental and control groups. Instead, Cronbach advocated the use of individual test item scores versus average total scores as a basis for evaluating program effectiveness (Madaus et al., 1983b, pp. 11-12). This expansion stage in evaluation was significantly influenced by the profusion of monies made available by the federal government to improve citizen opportunities and conditions through social, health, and educational programs.

The present day focus and concern with evaluation has been traced back to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1964 (ESEA), when Senator Robert F. Kennedy and other Congressional leaders inserted an amendment which required that an evaluative component be included in all projects receiving federal funding (Katzenmeyer, n.d., p. 4; Madaus et al., 1983b, p. 13). More specifically, the ESEA evaluation component required educators to

measure how well their objectives had been achieved by compiling standardized test data on an annual basis. Out of necessity, this prompted educators to re-orient their evaluation forms from the theoretical to the applied realm (Madaus et al., 1983b, p. 13). A problem was that existing evaluation tools at that time were simply found to be inadequate in terms of rigor to help accomplish the needed tasks. As a result of the apparent insufficiency of evaluative measures at the time, a call for new theories and methods came forth. A number of new conceptualizations offered by various researchers arose (Madaus et al., 1983b, p. 14). For example, Cook (1966) advocated the adoption of a systems-analysis model for evaluation. Scriven (1967), Stufflebeam (1967), Stufflebeam et al. (1971), and Stake (1967) provided a new orientation to evaluation by emphasizing a focus on goals, inputs, the implementation and delivery of services, the measurement of anticipated and unanticipated program outcomes/benefits, and the judgment of program merit, worth, or value. Overall, this stage in the development of evaluation did not conclude with convincing findings about the programs evaluated nor ascertain the effectiveness of the evaluation process and its methodologies (Madaus et al., 1983b, pp. 14-15).

The sixth and present era of evaluation, the Age of Professionalization (1973 to present), reflects the emergence of evaluation as a distinct profession, separate from research and testing. Whereas, the evaluation field previously lacked formal professional organization, training and certification, a body of literature, communication, and the standards of good practice, the evaluation field has now matured (Madaus et al., 1983b, pp. 15-17). A new thrust that has emerged during the present era of evaluation is meta-evaluation (Scriven, 1975; Stufflebeam 1978). Meta-evaluation is concerned with "the evaluation of evaluation" (Scriven, 1975) or with "evaluating evaluation" (Stufflebeam, 1978). Other developments within the field which expand upon the variety of evaluation approaches possible include these: goal-free evaluation (Scriven, 1974a; Evers, 1980); meta-analysis (Glass, 1976; Krol, 1978); responsive evaluation (Stake & Gjerde, 1974); and naturalistic evaluation (Guba & Lincoln, 1981). An apparent problem with respect to evaluation is that even with the growth and development reported in the evaluation field, the nature of evaluation practice has not changed very much overall. A continued need

exists to seek out and develop appropriate techniques that meet the needs of clients and related programs (Madaus et al., 1983b, pp. 17-18; Kaplan, 1964).

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF EVALUATION?

As a result of large amounts of public or private funds having been channeled into therapeutic recreation programs, an accompanying need to demonstrate the effectiveness, efficiency, and benefits of these programs came about. To put it simply, evaluation was needed.

Just what is evaluation concerned with? Just what is evaluation expected to do? Evaluation is a set of procedures aimed at monitoring the changes that accrue to clients as a result of being exposed to a program or treatment (Nunnally, 1975). Evaluation is also used to determine if the stated objectives of a program have been achieved (Bloom, 1970, p. 28) and it plays a role in the decision-making process (Anderson & Ball, 1978, p. 14).

A program has been referred to as a sponsored activity which is directed at modifying a problem or improving well-being (Perloff, Perloff, & Susna, 1976). A wide variety of program activities lend themselves to being evaluated: for instance, educational, rehabilitation, health, social, and individual and group activities (Anderson & Ball, 1978, pp. 2-3).

Generally speaking, it is often assumed that the aim of evaluation is focused on but one thing: whether a program has any merit (Anderson & Ball, 1978, p. 3). Scriven (1967) pointed out that many evaluators take a formative-summative approach to evaluation. According to Anderson and Ball (1978, p. 3), "The purpose of summative evaluation is to assess the overall effectiveness of an operating program, while the purpose of formative evaluation generally is to help develop a new program." Formative evaluation has also been described as a tool used to examine ongoing processes over the course of a program, so as to provide valuable and timely feedback, which can be used to revise a program (Henderson & Bialeschki, 1995, pp. 6, 47). Additionally, some evaluators focus on improving programs as their specialty (Anderson & Ball, 1978, p. 3), rather than the decision-making aspects of programs.

Six main areas of evaluation have been identified by Anderson and Ball (1978, pp. 3-4, 15-42), drawing on the work of Scriven (1974b), whose checklist, as follows, is designed to assess (educational) products or proposals.

1. To contribute to decisions about program installation (i.e., "front-end analysis" (Hartless, 1973) concerning the need, demand, and feasibility associated with a program).
2. To contribute to decisions about program continuation, expansion, or "certification" (i.e., What was the overall program effectiveness? Is it still necessary? Were there unexpected outcomes?).
3. To contribute to decisions about program modification.
4. To obtain evidence to rally support for a program.
5. To obtain evidence to rally opposition to a program.
6. To contribute to the understanding of basic psychological, social, and other processes (i.e., sometimes evaluation can add to basic knowledge acquisition if it is designed into an evaluation project well, but not at the expense of a quality evaluation product).

TRAINING FOR EVALUATION

Some view program evaluation to be a distinct discipline or profession, while others hold the viewpoint that it is sufficient to train people in social or educational research to do the job of conducting evaluation (Anderson & Ball, 1978, pp. 168-169). Regardless of which approach one philosophically adheres to, it can generally be agreed upon that properly conducted evaluation requires properly trained evaluators. One may, however, encounter the potential quagmire of deciding on just what is meant by properly conducted evaluation and training a n d who gets to decide on that? Furthermore, there are the issues of whether we select and become proficient in quantitative and/or qualitative modes of evaluation. Numerous surveys of evaluation experts have revealed the basic content area and skills deemed necessary for competent evaluators. These identified requirements broadly and typically include the following components: Knowledge of statistics, analysis, and research design, as well as interpersonal skills

(Anderson & Ball, 1978, pp. 172-177). Millman (1975) offered a review of the American Educational Research Association's (AERA) listing of twenty-five evaluation competencies as compiled by (Worthen, 1975).

Ricks (1976) provided a more pared down and different listing of "training needs for effective evaluators." Ricks suggested these six main competency areas: 1) the selection of research techniques that are comprehensible to practitioners and administrators as well as evaluators; 2) effective communication which includes the ability to interpret and explain what the evaluation statistics mean to program directors; 3) flexibility and creativity so as not to be bogged down by research or personal biases; 4) involvement in decision making to the extent of being able to support the evaluation derived alternatives as though the evaluator's money was on the line, thereby lending credence to the evaluation findings; 5) consideration of ethics, in terms of being able to ask for a sound rationale for a project; and 6) a grasp of systems theory and practice so as to have a "dynamic conceptualization of evaluation."

Clearly reflected in the numerous evaluation competency listings is a call for analytic as well as interpersonal skill acquisition. The combination of these types of skill competencies is necessary in order for evaluators to conduct the process and product outcomes outlined in Stufflebeam's (1966; 1971; 1983; Stufflebeam et al., 1971) CIPP (Content-Input-Process Product) evaluation model. Stufflebeam's model will be discussed in the possibilities section of this chapter.

Three training issues that center about evaluators involve the following:

- 1) the type of competencies evaluators need depends on the types of programs and purposes of evaluation they will act upon;
- 2) the level of content area expertise an evaluator needs to conduct evaluations (i.e., some mastery of the subject area may be needed by individual evaluators, while the remainder of expertise may be supplied through a complementary team approach of evaluators); and
- 3) a recognition of the deficits in the evaluation process and the need to rely upon outside assistance.

POSSIBILITIES FOR THERAPEUTIC RECREATION EVALUATION REFORM

The continuity and cohesiveness of therapeutic recreation program services can be demonstrated through a united effort to improve evaluation strategies. While considering the development of a profession, Boulding (1980) observed that one factor that distinguishes a mature and secure profession from one that is immature and insecure is that only the former systematically records and analyzes its history. Evaluation in therapeutic recreation, which has a relatively short history, can provide a window from which past mistakes, or the failure to sustain or build on past successes, can provide direction for the future. In order to improve and demonstrate the strength of therapeutic recreation programs, evaluations must show changes in participant attitudes, knowledge, and behaviors leading toward independent leisure well-being.

In this section, the possibilities related to improved evaluation methodologies will be considered within the therapeutic recreation program process. First, a consideration of the historical progression of evaluation will present the relative status of coming full-circle in evaluation methodologies, which have traditionally focused on a "top-down" approach to evaluation to a more current emphasis on consumer-oriented evaluation based on a service-oriented structure of a "bottoms-up" approach centered upon the expressed needs of clients. The "quality service" models developed in the marketing literature (Zeithaml, Parasuraman, & Berry, 1990), as well as leisure service management literature (Murphy, Niepoth, Jamieson, & Williams, 1991), recognize who the "true boss" of the program is: the "true boss" today is the consumer (Holdnak, 1989).

Secondly, with regard to possibilities in program evaluation, we would do well to foster quality control of the evaluation process in therapeutic recreation, whether in clinical or community settings. One possibility suggested is a notion adhered to in the educational field and elsewhere, that of meta-evaluation. Meta-evaluation is evaluation of evaluation (Scriven, 1975). This section will focus on evaluation standards. Since evaluation is both an essential and inevitable human activity, sound evaluation practices should promote a more complete understanding and improvement of therapeutic recreation. Standards guiding therapeutic recre-

ation evaluation that play a meta-evaluation role (i.e., evaluation of the effectiveness of evaluation practices) can play a vital part in improving the practice of program evaluation and the quality of therapeutic recreation programs. Evaluation in therapeutic recreation services should be useful, feasible, ethical, and accurate. Standards which address general components of evaluation, whether formative or summative, in clinical or community settings, will enhance the quality of evaluation testing and principles, which guide the program evaluation work in therapeutic recreation services.

The problem of training evaluators addressed in the previous section of this chapter, which considered the problems of evaluating programs, prompts the possibility of considering ways to achieve improvement in training practitioners to conduct better evaluation procedures of therapeutic recreation programs. With what seems to be a movement in forming institutes and centers for training and development in critical aspects of the recreation profession (e.g., Project Life, University of Missouri; The Center for Accessibility, Indiana University at Bradford Woods; The Western Laboratory for Leisure Research, University of Utah; and the Center for Recreation and Disability Studies, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill), a possibility for the development of a training center of continuing education in qualitative and quantitative skills related to evaluation practices, as well as providing evaluation resources for program evaluation, is suggested. The currently accepted view of evaluation as a profession and a field within other fields (Cronbach & Associates, 1980; Madaus, Scriven, & Stufflebeam, 1983a; Anderson & Ball, 1978) provides both a framework and over a decade of studies focused on the improvement of program evaluation methods in human services.

Consumer-oriented Evaluation

The meaning of evaluation has been discussed in tandem with discussions on the purposes of evaluation. Evaluation has been said to be essentially the systematic and objective determination of the worth or merit of a service or program (Rossman, 1995). Michael Scriven (1967), in his classic article, "The Methodology of Evaluation", attached the meaning of evaluation to the comparative nature of the contrasting and competing objects in meeting the needs of consumers. According to this view, evaluation is compara-

ive; by implication it looks at comparative costs as well as benefits; it is concerned with how to best meet the needs of consumers. In order to evaluate something, we inevitably make comparisons (Steinmetz, 1983). Evaluations which are based on determining objectives, especially objectives set by external sources, are perceived as being fundamentally flawed, according to Scriven (1967). Scriven viewed evaluations based on this approach as being potentially invalid, since the developer's goals may lack the representation of consumer needs or they may simply be too narrow. Instead of using goals to guide and judge effects, Scriven has argued that evaluators should judge the goals and not be constrained by them in the search for outcomes.

Scriven's (1973; 1974a) model, sometimes referred to as "Goal Free Evaluation," asks this: "what has the program accomplished?" The emphasis seems to be on the external audience, the client/consumers. In this approach, the evaluators conscientiously avoid determining what the project actually accomplished. Scriven's view seems consistent with the "interactionist" approach to program evaluation addressed by Bullock (1982). According to Bullock, interactionist evaluators look for "what is", not "what should be."

The interactionist perspective has special relevance because leisure has the potential for representing multiple meanings. A therapeutic recreation program may be designed for certain experiences. The clients, however, may actually have leisure experiences that are different from the planned engagements: this may result from the dynamic nature of social interaction with other clients and staff. As a result, what a program "is" cannot be judged *a priori* by management or by external stakeholders. Client-oriented evaluation approaches such as those identified by Scriven (1974a) and Bullock (1982) attempt to discover what is actually going on in the program being evaluated. The therapeutic recreation program evaluator is expected to recognize the manifest goals and accomplishments of the program as he/she delivers the actual program content in the clinical or community setting. Scriven has argued, "that what is intended is not important, that the program is a failure if its results are so subtle that they do not penetrate the awareness of an alert evaluator" (Stake, 1983, p. 290).

Consumer-centered evaluation might, therefore, best be addressed by actively engaging in evaluation procedures that include

client generated needs and concerns. This perspective of evaluation has been acknowledged in the leisure literature with user suggestions of the following models: (1) Importance-Performance (Edginton, Hanson, & Edginton, 1992; Rossman, 1995); (2) Triangulation (Bullock & Coffey, 1980; Carpenter & Howe, 1985); and (3) Responsive Evaluation (Chenery & Russell, 1987).

Professional evaluators, generated largely from the field of education, have and continue to wrestle with issues related to the expressed needs of those who receive program services. Obtaining client input into evaluation and program design is not an easy process; it involves action-oriented planning. The relationship suggested by Steinmetz (1983), in his discussion of the Discrepancy Evaluation Model, is that the evaluator (e.g., the therapeutic recreation program planner) considers the value of the client's input into the process, based upon the client's existing knowledge of his/her own experiences, values, and purposes in participation, growth, treatment, and independent leisure well-being.

These issues regarding the need to re-focus attention on the client and participant in program and evaluation design is basically a reaction to the co-opting or biases in evaluation processes due to the external stakeholder's dominance and control of the stated outcomes of evaluation. In this scenario, the emphasis is on those objectives which are most likely to show where the program is successful.

The possibility arising from these concerns is not to advocate one evaluation model over another (i.e., positivism versus rationalism). Rather, the pertinent issue which arises is, what method of quality control, if any, exists in therapeutic recreation evaluation practices today? Is there accountability in the evaluation methods chosen or prescribed in therapeutic recreation agencies? In the next section, the matter of meta-evaluation, that is, the investigation on evaluation itself, will be examined.

Meta-evaluation

From the program planner's viewpoint, evaluation results should be able to confidently imply that the program proved that it was doing what it said it would do (i.e., it implemented all components) and that it had a substantial effect on all or most of the participants/clients/consumers. Meta-evaluation is an evaluation of evaluation (Scriven, 1975; Stufflebeam, 1978). Meta-evaluations

are conducted to provide assurances of the quality of an evaluation, to provide credibility for the evaluation process, and to improve subsequent evaluations. "Because program properly implemented evaluation leads to program improvement, evaluations of evaluations or meta-evaluations give assurances that under existing circumstances the best possible information is provided" (Basarab & Root, 1992, p. 250).

Meta-evaluation is a management tool used to analyze and evaluate whether components considered important to all stakeholders of the therapeutic recreation program have been given the appropriate weight in the evaluation design. The intent is to provide indicators for therapeutic recreation programs which pertain to the overall quality of the agency/hospital's program services. Quality indicators of school evaluation by which schools could be held accountable to their stakeholders was discussed in an article by Arnold Gallegos (1994) entitled "Meta-Evaluation of School/Evaluation Models." These quality indicators or accountability strands explicate the underlying values upheld by the program service providers. Similarly, parallel quality indicators could be identified and applied to therapeutic recreation services.

To conduct meta-evaluation of evaluation models used by a given agency, meta-evaluation standards should be employed. The standards utilized by the Center for Research on Educational Accountability and Teacher Evaluation (CREATE) may have applicability for therapeutic recreation evaluation practices. The categories and their corresponding standards consist of the following (The Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, 1981, pp. 6-7; Gallegos, 1994, pp. 47-48):

Utility standards (U): Ensure that an evaluation will serve the practical information needs of given audiences.

1. Audience identification
2. Evaluator credibility
3. Information scope and selection
4. Valuational interpretation
5. Report clarity
6. Report dissemination
7. Report timeliness
8. Report impact

Feasibility Standards (F2): Ensure that an evaluation will be realistic, prudent, diplomatic, and frugal.

1. Practical procedures
2. Political viability
3. Cost effectiveness

Propriety Standards (P): Ensure that an evaluation will be conducted legally, ethically, and with due regard for the welfare of those involved in the evaluation.

1. Formal evaluation
2. Conflict of interest
3. Full and frank disclosure
4. Public's right to know
5. Rights of human subjects
6. Human interactions
7. Balanced reporting
8. Fiscal responsibility

Accuracy Standards (A): Ensure that an evaluation will reveal and convey technically adequate information about the features of the object being studied that determine its worth or merit.

1. Object identification
2. Context analysis
3. Described purposes and procedures
4. Defensible measurement
5. Valid measurement
6. Reliable measurement
7. Systematic data control
8. Analysis of quantitative information
9. Analysis of qualitative information
10. Justified conclusion
11. Objective reporting (Gallegos, 1994, pp. 47-48).

For programs in therapeutic recreation to be successful, good evaluation methods need to be incorporated into the program planning process. Accountability of evaluation instruments and procedures would be strengthened by considering standards such

as those outlined by Gallegos (1994). Witt, Crompton, & Baker (1995) support the importance of improved evaluation procedures: "...there is a strong need for careful planning of evaluation strategies, involvement of individuals who are knowledgeable about how to undertake the evaluation process, and 'evaluation' of the evaluation process itself to make sure it is well conceived and appropriate for its intended purpose" (Witt, Crompton, & Baker, 1995, p. 30).

The CIPP Model (Stufflebeam, 1966)

Subjecting one's evaluation work to evaluation through meta-evaluation has been the philosophical underpinning of Daniel Stufflebeam's (1966; 1971; 1983) CIPP Model (Context, Input, Process, Product) for evaluation. Stufflebeam's improvement-oriented evaluation was developed with the premise that "The most important purpose of evaluation is not to prove but to improve... We cannot be sure that our goals are worthy unless we can match them to the needs of the people they are intended to serve" (Stufflebeam & Shinkfield, 1985, p. 151).

The CIPP model posits three purposes for evaluation: (1) guiding decision making; (2) providing records for accountability; and (3) promoting understanding of the involved phenomena (Stufflebeam & Shinkfield, 1985, p. 159). Evaluation is, therefore, a process which assesses goals, design, implementation, and impacts of the object (i.e., for this chapter's purpose, we mean the therapeutic recreation program).

Stufflebeam's evaluation model, as a strategy for improving systems, seems to be a possible "good fit" for the needs and concerns relative to therapeutic recreation evaluation. Full implementation of the CIPP approach would yield information useful in addressing the following questions (Stufflebeam & Shinkfield, 1985, p. 165):

1. What needs were addressed, how pervasive and important were they, and to what extent were the project's objectives reflective of assessed needs (addressed by context information)?
2. What procedural, staffing, and budgeting plan was adopted to address the needs, what alternatives were considered, why

was it chosen over them, and to what extent was it a reasonable, potentially successful, and cost-effective proposal for meeting the assessed needs (addressed by input information)?

3. To what extent was the project plan implemented, and how and for what reasons did it have to be modified (addressed by process information)?

4. What results—positive and negative as well as intended and unintended—were observed, how did the various stakeholders judge the worth and merit of the outcomes, and to what extent were the needs of the target population met (product information)?

A CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF EVALUATION IN THERAPEUTIC RECREATION

The requirements of therapeutic recreation professionals, who are faced with issues of third-party reimbursements, impact data, documentation related to outcomes and accommodation, have experienced what could be interpreted as an evaluation crisis. A final possibility, related to the evaluation climate mentioned above, is to recognize that therapeutic recreation professionals generally are not qualified by training or experience to design and conduct evaluations. Few curricula provide the time or depth for individuals to acquire the skills required to conceptualize good evaluation design. A Center for the Study of Evaluation in Therapeutic Recreation Services could advance the theory and practice of evaluation. Goals associated with such a center might include the following: (1) to provide evaluation services to the National Therapeutic Recreation Service (NTRS), the American Therapeutic Recreation Association (ATRA), and therapeutic recreation departments or service programs; (2) to study service and program experiences; (3) to conceptualize improved ways of doing evaluation; (4) to devise tools and strategies to carry out new ideas about evaluation in therapeutic recreation settings, including therapeutic recreation transitional, outreach, and aftercare services; and (5) to disseminate appropriate evaluation information to aid in the

evaluation challenges facing the therapeutic recreation profession in the twenty-first century.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Compare and contrast the six main areas of program evaluation. What changes might you expect in the future? Is the current stage of professionalization nearing its end? If so, why?
2. Why is meta-evaluation necessary? How would this concept be applied in therapeutic recreation? How would a clinical setting use meta-evaluation in its quest to secure third-party funding?
3. Identify three purposes of evaluation. Demonstrate how each would be used in a clinical- or community-based setting.
4. What changes in the professional preparation program at your university need to be made to improve your competence as a student? What changes need to be made in our continuing education efforts to improve current practitioners' competence in evaluation?
5. What steps need to be taken to shift the focus of evaluation from the program or service, to the customer or client? Are the approaches suggested by Scriven and Bullock the wave of the future? If so, why?

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