

Subtopic 3: Relationship Between Skill and Challenge

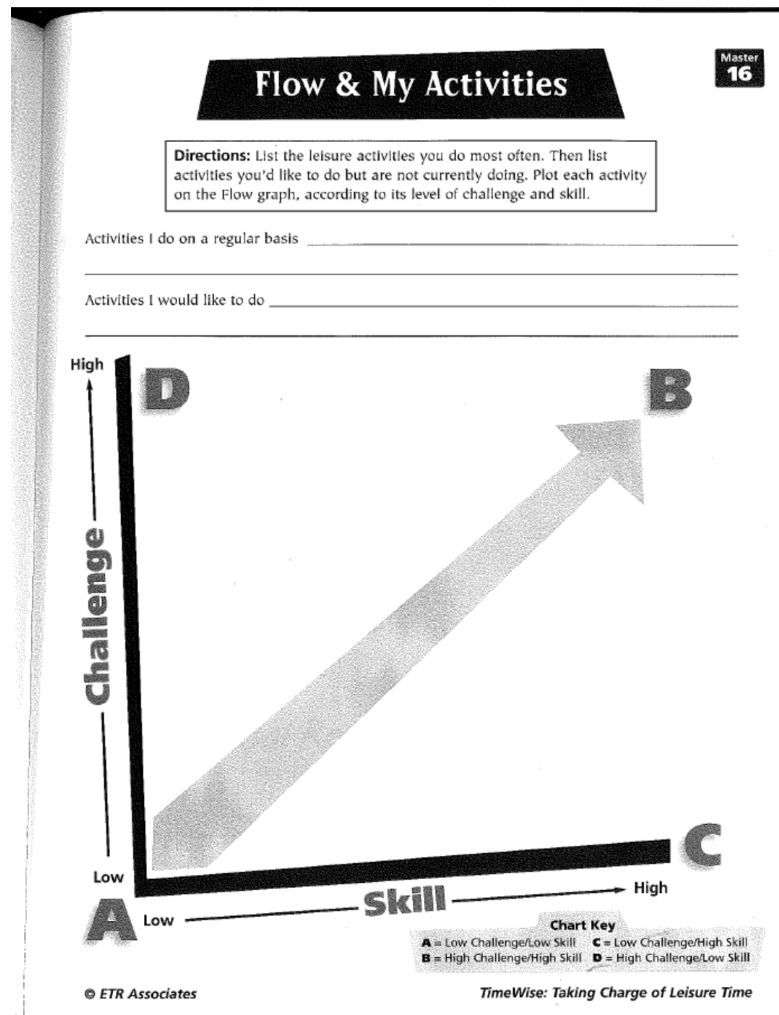
Ask and Discuss:

- What do you think causes people to be focused and absorbed in the activity, versus being unfocused and uninterested?

As important aspect of getting into the flow is that a person has a good match between their skill level and the degree of challenge of the activity.

You may want to use either Flow Model 1 or Flow Model, or both, to discuss the relationship between skill level and challenge and emotion. In Model 1, the arrow in the middle pointing from A to B is called the Flow Zone. It suggests that one can achieve flow at low skill levels if the challenge is not too difficult and the person feels they can handle that challenge. As long as there is a balance between skill level and challenge, flow may be achieved.

Flow Model 1:

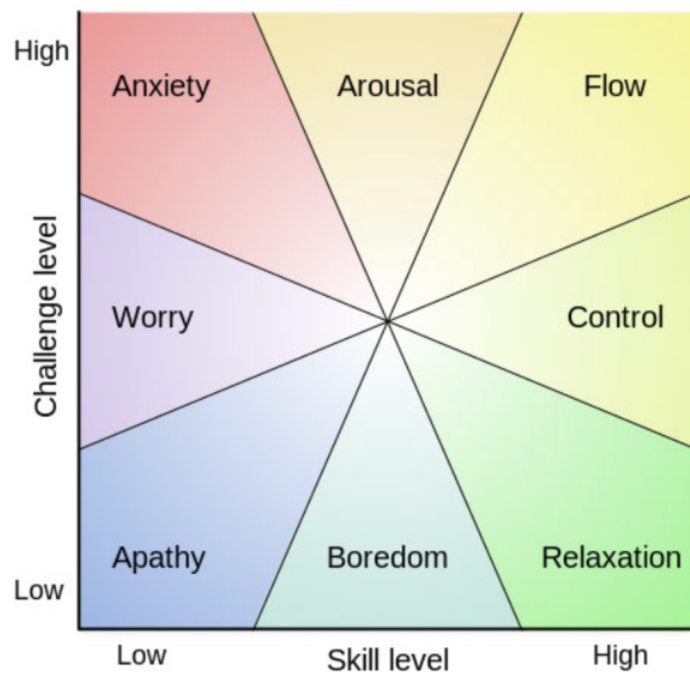


- What are some activities that you do that would fit into category A in Model 1? What about D, or in between A and D?
- How would you feel if you were in a situation where you had a high degree of skill but there was little challenge? For example, you had a good skill level at modern dance but you were rehearsing for a play where you were learning a dance that was very simple and that you had learned 2 years ago.

Low skill level and high challenge is likely to lead to anxiety, whereas high skill and low challenge is likely to lead to boredom. Flow Model 2 details these relationships in more detail.

Flow Model 2:

Csikszentmihalyi's Flow Model



Flow Model 2 shows a more detailed description of what can happen when skill level and challenge is unbalanced.

What this concept suggests is that if we know how to choose activities that match our skill level, we are more likely to have a positive experience.