

**BIBLIOTHERAPY AND PURPOSIVE READING
MODELS FOR SENIORS DEVELOPED BY THE
PROJECT
„FEEL BETTER WITH A BOOK: READING FOR
WELL-BEING AT AN OLDER AGE” (NPAD-2016/10321)
2016-2017**

Content

| | |
|--|----|
| About the project | 2 |
| Project partners: | 3 |
| Introduction to bibliotherapy and purposive reading | 4 |
| Description of purposive reading and bibliotherapy models developed during the project „Feel better with a book: reading for well-being at an older age” (NPAD- 2016/10321) | 9 |
| Useful links: | 30 |

About the project



Rapid changes of modern society force people to adjust to new situations. A great deal of elderly people desire to integrate better and improve quality of their life, but unfortunately face many difficulties.

Learning at an older age can help overcome those challenges and it is universally recognized that reading is one of the most accessible forms of learning for the elderly. The most effective is purposive reading or bibliotherapy. It is a method which uses reading to reinforce what is already good and healthy within a person, makes it easier to adapt, and weakens influence of negative environment. Reading sessions can be held in a variety of venues, such as libraries, hospitals, and elderly care homes.

The fact that all partners' countries face similar challenges has encouraged organizations and institutions from Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania and Sweden to implement a project together. The project „Feel better with a book: reading for well-being at an older age” (NPAD-2016/10321) was implemented in 2015-2015 by the group of partners Parnu (Estonia), Lidköping (Sweden), Utena (Lithuania) and ventspils (Latvia).

The aim of the project was to improve potential of participating institutions – libraries, associations, seniors' centres and elderly care houses in creating new purposive reading and bibliotherapy models that involve seniors into meaningful activities of informal learning helping them improve their mental health, adapt more easily, and overcome psychological difficulties related to complicated social life. Project results achieved through partnership and cooperation:

- 39 mobility visits to Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Sweden organized.

- Knowledge on purposive reading and bibliotherapy gained, qualification of participating institutions staff improved.
- New interinstitutional relations established.
- Experience on purposive reading and bibliotherapy exchanged among all project partners.
- New purposive reading and bibliotherapy ideas, models developed, and described.
- Pilot reading activities for seniors organized with cooperation of all partner institutions. More than 120 seniors attracted to participate.

Project partners:

1. Association of Lithuania's Regions Libraries (LRBA), Lithuania
2. Utena Third Age University, Lithuania
3. Central Library of Vilnius City Municipality, Lithuania
4. Venspils Library, Latvia
5. Pärnu Central Library, Estonia
6. Tammiste Elderly Care Home, Estonia
7. Public Library of Lidköping, Sweden
8. Lidköping Municipality, Community Care Services Department, Senior Center, Sweden
9. Study center „Studieförbundet Vuxenskolan“, Sweden



Photo from the project partners' meeting at Lidköping Library, Sweden in February of 2017.

Introduction to bibliotherapy and purposive reading

Reading is one of the most delicate and intimate forms of person communication. Rhetoricians of antiquity were disaffected about „try to slip in into other persons soul“, i.e. highlighted persons right to privacy of reading. „Is it moral to slip in to other persons soul?“ they asked. Maybe it sounds paradoxical but bibliotherapy is based on „slip into“ persons soul or even spirit. Reading can be just shallow or „deep“and experts of bibliotherapy affirm that useful is reading when person reads text and experiences emotions by it. If to feel strong about other persons soul is possible to experience emotional shock which after heals, helps to identify and change situations and feelings. Bibliotherapy helps to acquire wisdom via experience of other persons in text, to analyse and to fix experience by text. It is one of the main principles of bibliotherapy. The second method in bibliotherapy is analysis of text because it is important to select and read texts which are proper, wise and compatible for certain group of persons and correspondent to certain situation.

Person who provides service of bibliotherapy must to have special skills or knowledge in psychology. Professional psychologist must to participate at the providing bibliotherapy services affirm adherents of therapy conceptions. On first level (reading of text) and second level (analysis of text) bibliotherapy sessions librarian can lead a group but on third level (discussion - summarize of bibliotherapy session) must be used plan of session prepared in advance which has particular aims and tasks. Psychologist helps to prepare such a plan.

Librarian can lead group sessions but to summarize results and to seek for a group members emotional changes on purpose to receive changed quality of life as group sessions result can psychologist only. Theory offers many methods which can be used in bibliotherapy. Librarian and psychologist must to analyse various techniques of bibliotherapy use, to study various methods of reading and collate them with needs and demands

of bibliotherapy target group. After they can to choose the best method for a group.

Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow – scholars and authors of humanistic method stated that the main task of humanistic school is to learn how to live by universal values but at the same to reveal and realize personal abilities. Therapist who uses bibliotherapy humanistic method or other specialist who provides this service and works sequentially with a permanent group can reach good results and to shape a versatile personality.

If person wants to realize own abilities he must at first to know himself or to identify himself affirms A. Maslow. Scholar says that perfect person is person who analyses himself. Person can become perfect when basic needs satisfied. Basic needs often depicted as hierarchical levels within a pyramid. The basic of pyramid : biological and physiological needs - air, food, drink, shelter, warmth, sex, sleep, the second stage : safety needs - protection from elements, security, order, law, stability, freedom from fear. Third stage: love and belongingness needs - friendship, intimacy, trust and acceptance, receiving and giving affection and love. Affiliating, being part of a group (family, friends, work). The fourth stage: esteem needs - achievement, mastery, independence, status, dominance, prestige, self-respect, respect from others. This arrangement shows that one must satisfy lower level deficit needs before progressing on to meet higher level growth needs. When a deficit need has been satisfied it will go away, and our activities become habitually directed towards meeting the next set of needs that we have yet to satisfy. Hungry person doesn't care about safety, person who feels danger doesn't seek for love and doesn't care do others respect him, person who has low self-confidence can't to develop his creativity and to actualize himself.

If person wants to realize his opportunities he must to learn satisfy needs of lower stages of „needs hierarchy pyramid“ and for this person must to learn how to know himself. It is hard to overcome this by himself because use of humanistic method in bibliotherapy for socially exclusion groups helps and permits to find real abilities and aspirations as well helps to learn how to express himself in everyday life in positive way. Person must to learn to be „authentic“ and honest and his behaviour and parlance must to show his real feelings and emotions. So, one of tasks of bibliotherapy – ability to choose.

Human who can to choose in everyday life later is more self-confident at his own demands and trust own needs, desires and impulses when choose important things and essential values. Help of humanistic method (and after „self-help“) is the best way to cope and solve issues of loneliness, sadness, negative emotions it is a way to find yourself to understand who are you to recognise yourself and at the same to recognise nature of people.

Another very important aim of using humanistic method (by A. Maslow) – to show to in a some way lost person that **life is precious and dear**. Research confirmed that lonely people, people who lost their family members or can't to adjust to changing life situations (especially elder people) feel better if analyse texts in groups and attend groups of bibliotherapy also read for „self-help“. It is confirmed that when person can to be creative and experience joy when aspirations come true he or she feel and comprehend that life is significant. To feel self-esteem and to value life is very important and affect person in a way that person feels how life is significant and more valuable. Humanistic method is based on faith that human is integral and has internal power. If person lives in protected, free and host environment he can develop internal powers and become completely functioning person. Persons independence, creativity and ability to rely on ourself develop when at the first place is valuation of own results and self-criticicism but not criticism and valuation from „outside“.

American psichologist George I. Brown implemented ideas of humanistic psychology in consistent and practical way. G.I. Brown his approach to personality development named **confluent education**. This humanistic education theory and practice sources (in addition to those set out in the previous respective attitudes toward education and education) are **Gestalt Therapy and Psychosynthesis**. The main aim of those trends: to develop personality and organisation of education in that way that person would discover himself. Educator or teacher seeks to help a person of any age to comprehend that often it is just an imagination that person feels in deadlock. Human can mobilize internal power and to find a way. This is also education by humanistic method.

The main aim of Gestalt psychotherapy by humanistic education – to help person transit from reference by environment to reference by himself. Humanistic education seeks that person would stand on „both feet“.

Psychosynthesis – the second source of confluent education. Its founder – Roberto Assagioli, Italian psychiatrist. This scholar confirmed that exists special framework of personality. This framework allows to watch to all parts of personality: various feelings, thoughts, moods, wishes, social roles not like from side but from „internal me“ and human can observe own body sensations, to watch at his internal conflicts of wishes or adversative feelings and to reconcile them to integrate. Other important concept at confluent humanistic education – part of personality. We often say „a voice which warns“. This voice like warns to do nothing if we plan to do something new.

For psychologically immature person is complicated to control this denying part of personality. Only with strong will attempts, it is possible to regulate and control those parts of personality but not to suppress them.

By sources mentioned above, we can say that confluent humanistic education based on the main provision of humanistic psychology: human is indivisible and versatile. If person functions as one versatile and solid creature, his education also must have direction to human wholeness and include not only his interests, emotions, imagination, provisions and values but also his communication with other people. Humanistic education must to help to search and find new forms of partnership, which enable to uphold person's internal power and determine his personality development and integration (socialization) to society.

Services of bibliotherapy based on those principles in USA and in some countries of Europe already practiced long time and it is useful to refer their experience on purpose to develop similar services.

Description of purposive reading and bibliotherapy models developed during the project „Feel better with a book: reading for well-being at an older age” (NPAD-2016/10321)

Lidköping Library services for elderly and disabled people, Lidköping, Sweden



The library law is not very specific but our work on this matter focuses on what the law says about priority groups. Special attention is to be shown to groups that need adapted media and those who cannot come to the library themselves, due to disability or just old age. The other priority group is people

with a minority language and those who have Swedish as their second language, but that is not what we are going to deal with today.

Home delivery of books - “Boken kommer”

If you are sick and old you can have books delivered to your own home. We put together a book bag with a selection of books and our caretaker makes the delivery, twice a week. You do not have to bother about overdue books or fees; the librarian takes care of everything. Most of the patrons using this service make a phone call and ask for a new bag of books, sometimes with specific wishes and sometimes they just let us pick and choose. I think Swedish libraries have had this service since the eighties, but it's still quite difficult to spread information about the possibility. It is of course more difficult to arrange this outside the town centre, but we have some help from the home care, in Järpås for instance. When they go with meals or just go home to someone who needs help, they also take a book bag with them that we have prepared. Our mobile library also delivers these book bags if it is possible along the route. I think we have about 20 users of this kind totally.



Book delivery to elderly care homes

The library also supply care homes with books. We load boxes with a selection of books, sometimes magazines, music cd and audio books. Our caretaker or in some cases other staff or our mobile library deliver these books that will form a kind of mini library in the care home. After 6- 8 weeks we change books again. Right now, we have this service in at least 15 different places.

The problem with this way of working is that we have little idea about how much these books are used. Now, many small libraries cut in this activity, it was very common twenty years ago but now it's decreasing I think.

Läsombud – staff reading aloud and being the link between the residents and the library



Our goal is to have a contact or what we call “läsombud”, a person reading aloud, at each elderly care home. They are trained staff who arranges reading sessions where they read aloud to a small group of people. It can be very hard to find time during the day to these activities but we try to stress on the importance of these sessions. If you have been used to reading books in your

life, you have the right to go on with this – but in another way. Taking part of literature, information and news is just a part of everyday life – if you read yourself or if someone reads aloud to you.



These reading sessions can look very different...

Catch the moment - if the residents suffer from dementia you might just have to catch the moment when they are receptive

A special time - for instance every Wednesday at 11 o'clock

Around the coffee table in the afternoon

To support and encourage these readers we meet for inspiration days, some of them arranged by Anna's organization SV and a now and then we meet at the library discussing methods, exchange ideas and the library staff give book tips.

We also hope that these läsombud act as a link between the library and the possible readers. If there is a resident that wants books in a special subject or novels to read they know that they can contact the library.

Talking books for people with reading impairment



In Sweden we have a long tradition of talking books for people with poor eyesight or other reading impairment.

MTM- the Swedish agency for Accessible media –produces talking books and Braille books. They also do a lot of other things to help people that need adapted media to be able to understand information and literature. It has to do with democracy that information, news and literature should be available for everyone.

How these books are distributed has changed a lot over the years.

They cannot be bought by anyone but the libraries can buy discs called Daisy (because of the format). It's a CD-ROM that can be listened to in special readers or in a computer.

But as a library we can also download the files and make our own discs to lend to our users. We send these discs free of charge by the post. We can also save the files on memory cards or a stick and put maybe five or ten books on the same card.

There is also an even easier way to get hold of the books. If you have a reading problem you can register at the library and get your own login and password. Then you can use the app Legimus and download books to your smartphone or Ipad.

This way of using Legimus is much used by younger people and students at school who have dyslexia or other reading problems. Many of the children's

books are now made with both text and sound, so it's possible to follow the text while listening.

It's important to remember that this is a service for people with reading problems. You do not have to show a medical certificate but we have to inform about the rules. It has to do with the copyright law of course.

Daisy (Digital Accessible Information System) is a technical standard for digital audiobooks. It's specially designed for people with reading problems of all kinds.

Compared to a traditional audio book, these books have more navigation possibilities; place bookmarks, search, regulate the speaking speed and so on. It's a complicated technology and well developed.

The Daisy consortium was founded in 1996 by talking books libraries to lead the transition from analogue to digital talking books.

It consists of international organizations committed to developing access to information for people with print disability.

Bibliotherapy for the elderly people in Central Library of Vilnius City Municipality, Lithuania

Bibliotherapy in general is the therapy model that involves reading of specific texts with the purpose of healing. Reading texts are personally, mentally, emotionally, close for the gather group members, usually in different ways for everybody in person. It uses an individual's relationship to the content of books, poetry and other written words as therapy. Bibliotherapy can be combined with other therapy methods such as writing therapy, art therapy, and music therapy. The results of this reading are long-lasting, method as itself are adoptable in different age periods.

Central Library of Vilnius City Municipality prepared and successfully implements bibliotherapy program for elderly people in Vilnius city municipality. Program is based on changes in elderly people daily life, both physical and mental. Reading encourages all members of the group to express their personal feelings, emotions, worries related to the main idea of the text. Discussion moderated by professional psychologist helps the

members of the group to improve their mental health, to decrease feeling of loneliness. Possibility to adopt self-help method in bibliotherapy, when all reading group members suggest possible ways to solve the problem, provides opportunity of new solutions in situations with no way out. Possibility to change environment, to move out of home increase self – confidence, allows meeting other people facing the same challenges, and helps to find new friends, improve communication.

Central Library of Vilnius City Municipality combines bibliotherapy with arts in order to engage elderly people in culture life. Every two weeks after reading specially selected texts all members of the group have a possibility to visit exhibitions of art works, to meet different artists, and to talk with them discussing important topics.

At the beginning of the program, it was planned to have one group of 10 people every Saturday. However, after registration in the program it was decided to form two groups of 15 people in every group and to have reading sessions with them every Saturday. This decision required to invite more bibliotherapy specialists to work with these two groups. Seniors' interest in this reading program is still growing and the library already has already registered the new group of people for autumn season. All program services are free of charge. Central Library of Vilnius City Municipality is the first library in Lithuania adopting bibliotherapy method for the elderly persons integration and improvement of the quality of their life.



First meeting of the group



Meeting after reading with painter Vygatas Vējas.



Meeting after reading with embroidery artist Lara Mišina.



Reading in-group with coordinator.

**Book club „Silver Hour” in Kaunas Vincas Kudirka City Library,
Lithuania**

Book club “Silver Hour” is a forum where readers can come together and talk about books and the reading experience, participate in cultural events and meet writers. Book club meetings take place in “Berželis” library once a month. Book club “Silver Hour” was founded in January 2016 and now has 20 members.

Book club activities:

- Taking interest in new books and literature.
- Talking about books and reading experience.
- Taking part in cultural events.
- Meeting with writers, artists and other people.
- Watching movies and performances based on books.
- Organizing trips to museums and residences of famous writers.



Meeting with actress Kristina Kazakevičiūtė

The actress briefly told about her life and career. She studied librarianship but never worked as a librarian. Her parents were actors, so she became an actress too. Both Kristina's daughters are artists too.



Members of book club were happy to hear actress reading novels, book passages and Japanese haiku.



Discussion "Mature woman's attitude to life"

People talked about mature woman's attitude to life and discussed a book about women written by famous Lithuanian writer Rūta Vanagaitė.



Dainava community line dancers taught members of book club how to line dance.



Meeting "On the wings of art: Christmas paper cuttings".



Folk artist Genovaitė Morkūnienė taught members of the book club
how to make paper cuttings.

Reading club in Tammiste Elderly Care Home, Pärnu, Estonia



Bibliotherapy workshop at Tammiste Elderly Care Home



On May 10th, the librarians of Pärnu Central Library and reading- and therapy dog Chilli visited Tammiste Elderly Care House. The master of Chilli, Ivi Brant introduced to the patrons of elderly care house the activities of reading and therapy dogs, also the habits of Chilli. The librarians told about reading to reading dogs, audio books and about reading aloud. The patrons had possibility to listen the first chapter from well-known Estonian book „The Truth and the Justice“, which is known to almost every Estonian.



They listened the book and at the same time had the possibility to pet Chilli. Chilli also made some tricks. The patrons liked very much such a way of listening the audio book together – later they told about their own memories about this book and also about their own dogs.

The librarians also brought to the elderly care home the books they themselves don't need anymore – mostly the photo albums and biographies. The patrons were very interested in those books.

As the reading because of bad eyes is a problem for the elderly people, they liked very much such a way of listening the audio book together. Moreover, the reading dog is an extra bonus in this case.



Trained dogs at the Tammiste Elderly Care Home



Services for seniors and disabled in Ventspils Library, Latvia

To improve life quality, integration into society and decrease social exclusion of seniors and people with special needs, Ventspils Library offers several free services. Since 2010, people who cannot visit library due to health issues are serviced at home, and since 2012 in cooperation with Ventspils University College student volunteers, people with impaired vision are read for. For several years now, in the Learning Centre of the Main Library, everyone without any prior knowledge or skills can attend free information literacy courses.

Reading for visually impaired people



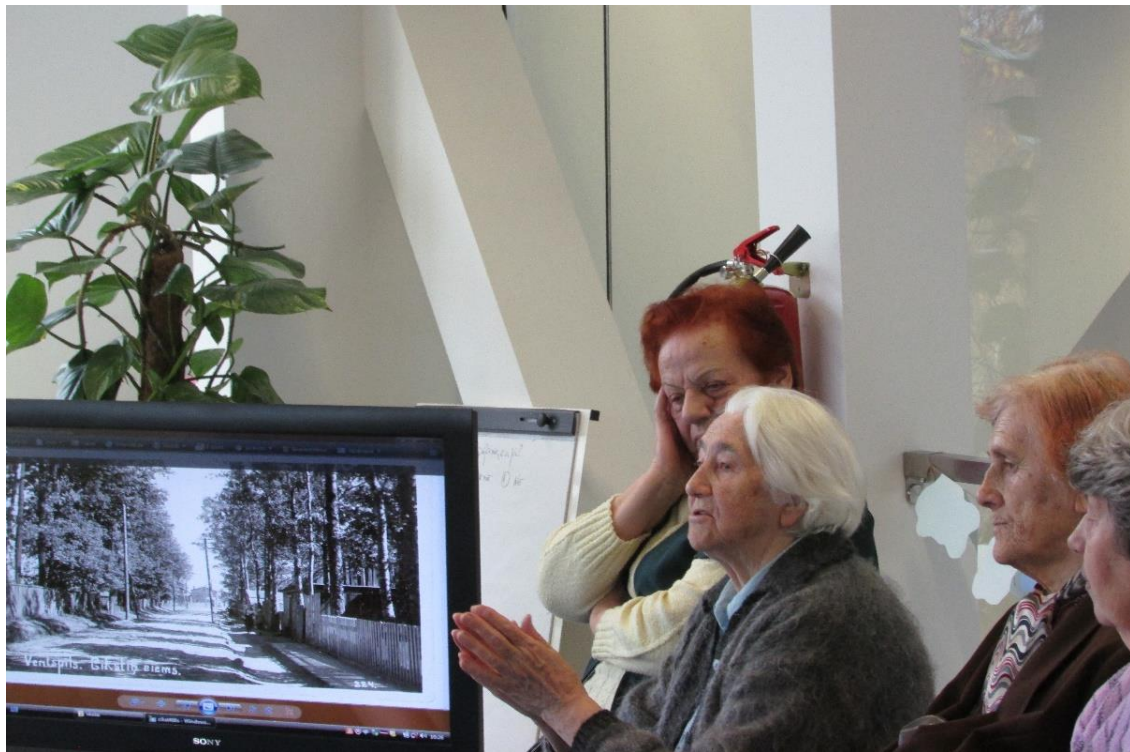
Ventspils Library in cooperation with Latvian Society of the Blind branch library and Ventspils University College students started a project in 2012 - reading for visually impaired people. Student volunteers sign up for this project at the beginning of each study year. Reading takes place every

Tuesday at 5pm, in the Main Library. Usually around 5 to 6 seniors and 3 to 4 volunteers attend these meetings. Municipality provides transportation for the participants.

By providing reading out loud for visually impaired people, Library aims to motivate people to use library as a source of information and creating social contacts, as well as motivate young adults to participate in volunteer work during their free time. By implementing this project, Library has improved life quality of people with special needs, helped them participate in social activities, as well as volunteers obtain new experience and skills.



Story libraries



For eight years two Ventspils libraries: Pārventa Library and Gāliņciems Library are participating in the project "Story Libraries" hosted by UNESCO Latvian National Committee which is aimed to improve storytelling as means of inheriting important non-material parts of the cultural heritage in Latvia.

Thanks to storytelling events, seniors with similar interests meet in the library and have a chance to meet each other and communicate. Both libraries have impressive story telling communities - 20 to 25 seniors in Pārventa Library and 12 seniors in Gāliņciems Library, where seniors - story tellers feel as a part of community where they care for each other and feel valuable as members of society.



Storyteller meetings take place once a month - every third Thursday of the month in Gāliņciems Library and last Friday of the month in Pārventa Library, except summer months. At the end of the each meeting, storytellers are introduced to the topic of next meeting and are invited to evaluate and complement the topic with their ideas and necessities.



These meetings are successful for so long thanks to people with similar interests and the topics that motivate people to share their memories and experiences, as well as giving they chance to meet with their peers and a

chance to feel valuable. Libraries here have a role to provide a space where these memories become important values for the next generations.

Seniors have learned to tell their stories in a way where they are interesting to every listener, not just the teller. They have learned to listen to each other and have come to understanding that there are no correct or incorrect stories.

Useful links:

1. Bibliotherapy – the power of words: <http://www.dublincity.ie/main-menu-services-recreation-culture-dublin-city-public-libraries-and-archive-library-services>
2. Fiction prescription: why libraries make you happy: <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2013/feb/08/bibliotherapy-books-lift-mood>
3. Introducing Bibliotherapy in Public Libraries for the Development of Health and Social Conditions of Post War Community in Jaffna District - An Exploratory Study: <https://blogs.ifla.org/riss/2013/05/20/introducing-bibliotherapy-in-public-libraries-for-the-development-of-health-and-social-conditions-of-post-war-community-in-jaffna-district-an-exploratory-study/>
4. Dali K. On Bibliotherapy: <https://www.ebscohost.com/novelist/novelist-special/on-bibliotherapy>
5. Bibliotherapy for mental health service users Part 1: a systematic review: <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1471-1842.2008.00821.x/full>
6. Canavan T. Textual healing – „The Power of Words“, bibliotherapy and better mental health: <http://www.booksirelandmagazine.com/textual-healing-power-words-bibliotherapy-better-mental-health/>
7. Mind the Gap: Do Librarians Understand Service User Perspectives on Bibliotherapy?

<https://www.ideals.illinois.edu/bitstream/handle/2142/46043/61.3.brewster.pdf?sequence=2>

8. Esler H. Bibliotherapy in Practice:

https://www.ideals.illinois.edu/bitstream/handle/2142/7228/librarytrendsv30i4j_opt.pdf?sequence=1

9. Elderly Health and Literature Therapy: A Theoretical Review:

http://www.journal.med.tohoku.ac.jp/2322/232_79.pdf

10. Content area reading:

https://books.google.lt/books?id=Mhsygz7-wOcC&pg=PA314&dq=bibliotherapy&hl=lt&sa=X&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=bibliotherapy&f=false