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The International Biophilia Rehabilitation Academy (IBRA) is a growing international body devoted to innovative rehabilitation medicine.

The literary meaning of the word 'biophilia' is 'love' for 'life'. That is actually the essence of rehabilitation. Rehabilitation, in the past, was most often associated with neuro-musculo-skeletal recuperation after trauma or various somatic diseases. This meaning has considerably evolved in recent times. We now talk about organ, like the lung, or system, like the respiratory system, rehabilitation. Psychological and anti-stress rehabilitation has moved to the center stage of late, which, in particular, concerns counteracting of the aging process. Since the aging process is not a pathological condition, the latter area of rehabilitation is not related to a disease – quite a change from the original concepts of medical rehabilitation.

Aging is inevitable. We witness a rapid extension of the life span, as individuals get ever closer to the biological limit of life. That, understandably, causes a range of medical problems. Rehabilitation aims at slowing of the aging process, making the life of better quality in old age, and promoting healthy life style. 'Love for the life' is the psychological basis of rehabilitation success. Rehabilitation research is thus not only about methods and technical innovations to improve physical functioning, but also to give psychological strength to overcome stigmatization of disabled or aged persons and to change attitudes toward them.

IBRA organizes conferences on rehabilitative medicine and innovations in it. It was my honor to chair the previous year’s conference in Warsaw, Poland. The present conference in Havana covers a broad range of aspects of rehabilitative medicine. The goal is to have clinically oriented conferences, which, however, cannot take place without the underlying basic research.

IBRA endeavors to contribute to the improvement of people’s lives and welfare, in particular, those who live into the old age; by doing so, IBRA proves the excellence and standing in the rehabilitation field.