Research into why people engage in sport and physical recreation has received relatively little attention in both recreation planning and sport psychology. Although there has been a steady flow of North American literature related to participation motivation in competitive youth sport settings, such evidence is of limited value in explaining adult involvement in sport and exercise in Britain. The purpose of this exploratory study was to determine why people participate in sport and exercise in community sport centers and to identify whether these motives predict sport enjoyment. The study was based on a questionnaire interview, conducted in six community sport centers in Leicester. The sample comprised 336 respondents aged 16 years and over. The subjects were presented with 15 motives for sport participation and indicated their degree of agreement on 5-point scale. The three most commonly endorsed motives were to maintain health, develop physical fitness and aid relaxation. A factor analysis with oblique rotation revealed four factors: assertive achievement, physical well-being, socio-psychological well being, physical well being and sport mastery and performance. Discriminant analysis showed that males were more motivated to participate for sport mastery and assertive achievement than females. Sport enjoyment was best predicted by socio-psychological well being, sport mastery and performance, and sports importance although only 14.4% of the variance in enjoyment scores was accounted for. These results confirm other research on age differences in exercise and mental health, as well as gender differences on participation motives. activity.