

The Seven Dimensions of Wellness





PHYSICAL



EMOTIONAL



SPIRITUAL



ENVIRONMENTAL



INTELLECTUAL



OCCUPATIONAL



SOCIAL

What is Wellness?

Wellness does not only refer to being and remaining physically well and free from illness, but also refers to multiple aspects of your being that make up your ability to live your life to the fullest. These aspects include Physical Wellness, Emotional Wellness, Spiritual Wellness, Environmental Wellness, Intellectual Wellness, Occupational Wellness, and Social Wellness. In addition, we have included Financial Wellness. Striving for overall wellness in all of these aspects will contribute to a more balanced and positive life (WLU, n.d).

Physical Wellness

Caring for one's physical health is essential to your wellness. Knowing what your body needs and listening to your body is incredibly important. When maintaining a strong and stable body, it is important for one to remember that they are caring for their body for the sake of their present health, as well as their future health. This not only refers to keeping the body moving everyday, but also staying hydrated, getting enough sleep, and eating well (WLU, n.d).



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Intellectual Wellness

Growing intellectually is another important aspect of your wellness. People who continue to grow intellectually throughout their life will tend to live more positive and successful lives. One can maintain and expand their knowledge by remaining curious, trying new things, developing new skills, sharing knowledge with others, responding well to intellectual challenges, and other such things that can expand their knowledge and skills. Having a desire to be a life-long learner is a great attitude to have to grow on your intellectual wellness (WLU, n.d).

Emotional Wellness

The emotional aspect of a person's wellness does not only refer to allowing oneself to feel their emotions, but also respecting and understanding your feelings, attitude, morals, managing your emotions in a purposeful way, and respecting and appreciating the feelings of others. Emotions can be difficult to deal with. One should always try naming the emotion before trying to solve the issue. Tending to one's emotional well-being is especially important during times of challenge (WLU, n.d).



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Social Wellness

Social aspects of wellness are important in managing one's self. This is seen through developing meaningful friendships and relationships, maintaining healthy relationships where one enjoys being around others, caring about others, allowing oneself to be taken care of, and contributing to your community in any way. Some find that feeling a sense of family and/or community is an incredibly important aspect of their social well-being (WLU, n.d).

Spiritual Wellness

Those who have an aspect of spirituality in their lives find themselves exploring a new side of their wellbeing that in turn, benefits other areas of wellness. Being spiritual involves finding meaning, purpose, and value in one's life, with or without organized religion. This can be found through participating in activities concerning the same beliefs and values that you share, along with exploring breathing techniques, faith, meditation, mindfulness (WLU, n.d).



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Vocational Wellness

Having an enjoyable job or volunteer space where one feels purposeful and important is very necessary for one's wellness. This is seen through preparing and participating in work that not only provides life enrichment but also individual satisfaction. The work one does should also be consistent with one's goals, lifestyle, and values. Along with working where one can contribute their skills, talents, and gifts in a purposeful way, it is also important that one is working somewhere they feel personally rewarded by the work they do. This aspect oftentimes gets ignored the most, as many choose to settle for a job they are not happy with. Starting a new career can be scary, but necessary for a positive life (WLU, n.d).

Environmental Wellness

Having a general feeling of connectedness with one's environment is important in feeling their best. This includes understanding how one's social, natural, and formed environments affect their wellness, well-being, and overall health. One also needs to understand the effects one has on the environment through their daily habits. This can lead to demonstrating a commitment to a healthy planet to the best of one's abilities (WLU, n.d).



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*Financial Wellness

Although not originally part of the 7 dimensions, financial wellness is incredibly influential toward one's well-being. This can begin by being aware that every person has unique financial circumstances, values, needs, and management. One also needs to be able to manage one's resources to live within their budget. This can come by making informed financial purchases and decisions, setting realistic financial goals, along with preparing for financial emergencies (WLU, n.d).

How It Affects Us

Each of these dimensions requires attention, as neglect of any aspect over time could negatively impact others, as well as personal well-being, health, and overall quality of life. These aspects may not be completely equally balanced, however, aiming for a sense of harmony within one's self is key to giving these aspects the care they need. Although we typically have a sense of what is beneficial for our well-being, it can be difficult to implement actions that support those ideas (WLU, n.d).



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Influences

Self-regulation is one of the two main influences of maintaining and managing these dimensions of wellness. Self-regulation refers to having the ability to deal with emotions and be able to avoid displaying inappropriate emotions by moderating and adapting emotional reactions. This can be demonstrated through directing your behaviour to control impulses, in order to meet standards and achieve goals. Self-regulation requires mental energy, which can be a reason why some lack regulation skills.

Habits are the other main influence on dimensions of wellness. A habit is known to be a regular tendency that is often hard to give up. In contrast to self-regulation, habits require little energy and therefore are developed a lot faster than they are broken. Not all habits are unhealthy, as some habits can be beneficial for oneself. Implementing healthy habits while reducing unhealthy ones can be key in balancing the dimensions of wellness.

(Durwin and Reese-Weber, 2020)



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Changing Habits

Changing habits requires two aspects, one being self-awareness. Self-awareness refers to monitoring, maintaining, and remedying the successes and struggles encountered every day. One start to self-awareness involves being aware of yourself and your preferences, such as:

- Night owl/early bird
- Marathoner/sprinter/procrastinator
- Over-spender/under-spender
- Simplicity/abundance
- Finisher/Opener
- Small step-taker/big step-taker

Understanding small preferences like these can lead to being more aware of how one operates and functions daily.

The other aspect is implementing strategies. Oftentimes, habit changes require more than one strategy. Some strategies include, but are not limited to;

- Abstaining
- Beginning habits to strengthen self-control
- Detecting rationalizations/false assumptions
- Increasing/decreasing convenience
- Monitoring
- Scheduling
- Systems of Accountability
- Rewards
- Treats

(Stoewen, 2017)

References

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