WELLNESS AND MINDFULNESS: PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH

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What is Wellness?

The Wellness Continuum

- Premature Death
- Disability
- Symptoms
- Neutral Point
  (No discernible illness or wellness)
- Awareness
- Education
- Growth
- High Level Wellness
  (Zest for life)
The Five Dimensions of Wellness

* Intellectual
* Emotional
* Social
* Spiritual
* Physical

Wellness includes prevention and the practice of holism: a personal commitment to enhance health through the five dimensions.

How do you take care of yourself in each dimension of wellness?

- **Intellectual** (Example: I learn a new vocabulary word every day)
- **Emotional** (Example: I seek counseling on a regular basis to help with anger management and depression)
- **Social** (Example: I play bridge twice a month with friends)
- **Physical** (Example: I make sure to walk for 30 minutes every day)
- **Spiritual** (Example: I meditate every morning for 5 minutes as soon as I wake up)
What does self-care look like for you?

Consider:
- Food/nutrition
- Water intake
- Movement/exercise
- Maintaining a healthy weight
- Medical and dental care
- Grooming (hair, skin, nails, etc.)
- Touch/physical pleasure
- Stress-relieving activities
- Sound (music, nature, other sounds)
- Safety issues
- Limiting screen time
- Avoiding exposure to excessively violent, abusive, cruel or negative people, images or media
- Balancing work responsibilities with family and leisure time
- Speaking up for yourself
- Paying attention to your finances

Physical well-being

Mental well-being

What is Mindfulness?
Understanding Mindfulness

- **Mindfulness**: the state of being attentive to and aware of what is taking place in the present

- When we are mindful, we are paying attention, on-purpose, non-judgmentally

  Yesterday is history.  
  Tomorrow is a mystery.  
  Today is a gift.  
  That is why it is called

  the present.

Mindfulness can increase:

- Gratitude
- Compassion
- Letting go
- Joy
- Skillful Communication
- Meditation/Prayer

- Creativity
- Anger Management
- Deep listening
- Wisdom
- Happiness
- Pleasurable moments
Mindfulness is a Way of Being

• Mindfulness in daily life means being present in all one’s activities and interactions

• When we live mindfully, we become more effective and more productive

Benefits of Mindfulness

• Turns off the stress response
• Facilitates relaxation
• Reduces stress hormones
• Boosts the immune system
• Reduces pain, anxiety, binge eating, depression, and stress
• Enhances positive states of mind
• Increases overall sense of control
When are you mindful?

Ten thousand flowers in spring
The moon in autumn
A cool breeze in summer,
Snow in the winter,
If your mind is not clouded by unnecessary things,
This is the best season of your life.

- Wu-men
(12th-century Chinese scholar)
Mindlessness:

- Occurs when our thoughts are not in the present moment and when we tune out what is happening.

Can you think of 3 examples of when you were mindless yesterday?
How about 3 examples of when you were mindful?
Practicing mindfulness is a gentle, gradual training in how to end dissatisfaction . . .

Mindfulness

TRY:
• Staying with one full in-breath as it comes in, one full out-breath as it goes out, keeping your mind open and free for just this moment, just this breath.

• Abandon all ideas of getting somewhere or having anything happen. Just keep returning to the breath when your mind wanders, stringing moments of mindfulness together, breath by breath.

• Try it every once in a while throughout this session.
Coherence Breathing

- Slow down your breath for relaxation, increased heart-rate variability (associated with a healthier, more flexible CV system and a more balanced and resilient stress-response system)

- The sweet spot is between 4-6 breaths/minute for most people (10-15 seconds per breath)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ol-q-oX-Slw

Practice Mindfulness

1. Breathing in, I know I am breathing in. In
   Breathing out, I know I am breathing out. Out

2. Breathing in, my breath grows deep. Deep
   Breathing out, my breath goes slow. Slow

3. Breathing in, I calm my body. Calm
   Breathing out, I smile. Smile

4. Breathing in, I am aware of the present moment. Present moment
   Breathing out, I know it is a wonderful moment. Wonderful moment
Mindfulness brings peace to the moment. Don’t miss the beautiful moments in life because your mind is elsewhere.

Contemplate This:

• Peace. It does not mean to be in a place where there is no noise, trouble, or hard work.
• It means to be in the midst of those things and still be calm in your heart.
Only that day dawns to which we are awake.

Henry David Thoreau (Walden Pond)

- Whole days, even a whole life, can slip by unnoticed.
- Try asking yourself from time to time, “Am I awake right now?”

Mindful Mountain Pose (Tadasana)

- Feel your feet pressing into the floor
- Press your tailbone, shoulder blades, and fingertips down
- Feel the crown of your head stretching up
- Lift your kneecaps, abdominals, and chest up
- Feel your down-ness and your up-ness at the same time
- Breathe!!
My New Habit (pick an easily manageable situation)

Tomorrow, when I

____________________________________________________________________

And I am tempted to

____________________________________________________________________

Then I will

____________________________________________________________________

Physical Well-Being

• Keep moving! What does that mean for you?

Did you know that sitting more than 30-60 minutes at a time is harmful to your health?

Suggestions:
- Take a break from sitting every 30 minutes.
- Stand while talking on the phone or watching television.
- If you work at a desk, try a standing desk — or improvise with a high table or counter.
- Walk with your colleagues for meetings rather than sitting in a conference room.
- Position your work surface above a treadmill — with a computer screen and keyboard on a stand or a specialized treadmill-ready vertical desk — so that you can be in motion throughout the day.
Can You Name the Immediate (Today’s) Benefits of Physical Activity?

- Better sleep
- Improved brain functioning
- Decreased stress, anxiety, and depression
- Decreased chronic muscle tension; feel better
- Increased energy and productivity
- Improved mood
- Improved self-confidence and self-esteem
- Better digestion
- Better posture
Physical Activity: what does it mean for you?

The more you can structure it so it’s fun, popular, and easy/convenient, the better!

1. **Fun**, pleasurable, enjoyable, believe that you will feel better
2. **Popular/normative**—can you do it with friends, family, or co-workers?
3. Convenient and **easy** to access/ easy for you to do

Which exercise is best?

- **The one you will do**!!
- The one you enjoy and is healthy and pleasurable
- Be aware that over-exercise (over-training) is stressful and potentially dangerous
A Balanced Fitness Program

A balanced fitness program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of physical activity</th>
<th>Cardiorespiratory training</th>
<th>Strength training</th>
<th>Flexibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Examples</td>
<td>Swimming, jogging, running, playing tennis or other sports, dancing, kickboxing, water aerobics, riding a bike</td>
<td>Weight lifting using free weights or machines, using body weight to generate resistance against body weight such as push ups, sit ups, resistance bands, heavy gardening</td>
<td>Flexibility exercises to lengthen the muscles,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency, duration and intensity</td>
<td>3-5 days per week, 20-60 minutes each time, 55 to 90% VO₂max</td>
<td>At least 2 days per week, 8-10 reptilians, with an intensity that enhances muscle strength</td>
<td>2-7 days per week, enough to develop and maintain a full range motion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Everybody Stretch!!
Eating Well

To make healthy, life-supporting foods a regular part of your lifestyle, make your eating plan:

1. **Fun**, enjoyable, pleasurable, believe that you will feel better
2. **Popular**, normative, social
3. **Easy**, convenient

What Makes a Healthy Meal?

- Many opinions!
- See choosemyplate.gov for government guidelines
- Almost everyone agrees with the following:
  - Minimize sugar
  - Minimize white flour products
  - Minimize processed foods
  - Eat lots of veggies and fruits!
Physical Health Goals for the Next Four Days

Over the next 4 days, I will _(physical activity goal)_ and _(healthy eating goal)_.

HINT: make your goals as specific, realistic, fun, and easy as possible! Make a specific 4-day plan now!

Caring for Your Mental Health

- **Intellectual Health**
  - The ability to think, learn, assess, and question
  - The ability to always be curious
  - The desire to never stop learning
  - The recognition that you can never know everything
Caring for Your Mental Health

• **Emotional/Psychological Health**
  • Experiencing a wide range of feelings and expressing them in appropriate ways, such as:
    - the ability to handle anger and frustration
    - the ability to give and receive love
    - the ability to let go and forgive
    - having a sense of humor

  *Skillful communication is key!*

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**Template for Saying Something Difficult**

• **When you** ______________________ (avoid insults, cursing, or blaming),
  • then **I feel** ______________________,
  • and **I need** ______________________ (or sometimes it’s “I imagine that”)
  • **So I request** that you ____________________________.
Changing your Self-Talk

- I can’t becomes _______
- I’m such a loser _______
- I’m not a good test-taker _______
- I’m not good at parties _______
- I can’t save money _______
- I hate cold weather _______
- I hate hot muggy days _______
- I’m not as productive as I should be _______
- I’m terrible at small talk _______
- I can’t seem to get ahead _______
- My life is a mess _______

When you catch yourself engaging in negative self-talk:

• Recognize your choice to think or say “STOP” to unconstructive thoughts
• Immediately replace a stress-producing, negative statement with a positive one
Caring for Your Mental Health

• Spiritual Health
  • Having principles and values that guide you and give meaning and direction.
  • A belief that each human being has a higher self.
  • Having a sense of oneness with other beings on the planet.
  • Having a reverence for nature.

Spiritual Wellness Assessment

-- I have a deeply held belief system or personal theology.
-- I have faith in a higher power.
-- My faith gives meaning to the experiences and relations in my life.
-- Even during difficult times, I have a sense of hope and peace.
-- My spiritual beliefs help me remain calm and strong during times of stress.
-- I feel a connection to the people and the world around me.
-- I am able to forgive people, even when I think they have wronged me.
-- I seek time with nature and reflect on how nature contributes to my quality of life.
-- I find comfort in the practice of spiritual rituals (prayer, meditation, music, etc.)
-- I respect the diversity of spiritual expression and am tolerant of those whose beliefs differ from my own.
-- I can clearly articulate the meaning and purpose of my life.
-- My inner strength is related to my belief in a higher power.
-- I take time to be of service to others and enjoy doing so.
-- I feel a sense of harmony and inner peace.
-- I think my life is balanced.
-- I feel responsible and am actively involved in preserving the environment.
-- The way I live my life is a reflection of what I value most.
### What will you do to improve your spiritual health? When?

1. Develop a sense of meaning and purpose in life?
2. Develop a belief in a higher power?
3. Develop a feeling of connectedness (with self, others, the universe)?
4. Develop compassion for yourself and for others?
5. Practice religious behaviors, meaningful rituals, meditate or pray?

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### Let it be
Let it go
Let it in
Mental Health Goals for the Next Four Days

Over the next 4 days, I will practice ________________________________________.

HINT: make your goals as specific and realistic as possible! Make a specific 4-day plan now!

THANK YOU!!

- May you be happy and peaceful
- May you ride the waves of your life
- May joy arise within you
- May you come to know the beauty of your own true nature
- May your heart be open

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