

Optimal Well-being

The National Wellness Institute defines wellness as *an active process through which people become aware of, and make choices toward, a more healthy and successful existence.*

What is Wellness?

- Wellness is a conscious, self-directed and evolving process of achieving full potential.
- Wellness is multidimensional and holistic, encompassing lifestyle, mental and spiritual well-being, and the environment.
- Wellness is positive and affirming.

Applying wellness to daily life includes: regular physical activity, healthy eating habits, developing positive sense of self as well as personal responsibility and self-care, seeking medical attention when needed.

Benefits of Being Well

Maintaining an optimal level of wellness is important to live a higher quality life. Wellness and well-being matters because our choices, actions and emotions felt impacts our well-being. In turn, our state of personal well-being affects our daily responses, actions and emotions, in an ongoing circle. It is important to achieve optimal wellness to manage daily stress, reduce the risk of illness, ensure positive interactions and live an optimal highest quality of life.

Types of Wellness

Each interrelated wellness dimension (emotional, spiritual, environmental, physical, social, and intellectual) is important in the pursuit of optimum health. One can reach an optimal level of wellness by understanding how to maintain and optimize the dimensions of wellness.

Emotional wellness relates to understanding your feelings and coping effectively with stress. It is important to pay attention to self-care, relaxation, stress reduction and the development of inner resources to learn and grow from experiences.

Physical wellness relates to maintaining a healthy body and seeking care when needed. Physical health is maintained through exercise, eating well, getting enough sleep and paying attention to the signs of illness and getting help when needed.

Social and intellectual wellness involves developing a support network, encouraging positive relationships. Keeping an open mind, to new ideas and continuing to expand knowledge. Active participation in self-improvement classes, cultural and community activities.

Spiritual wellness allows development values for meaning and purpose in life. Spiritual well-being assists in coping with life challenges.

9 Healthy Living Messages

The San Francisco Health Promotion and Disease Prevention program engages 9 Healthy Living Messages to promote wellness and well-being:

- Be involved in your health
- Strive for a healthy weight
- Eat wisely
- Limit alcohol
- Be physically active
- Be safe: prevent falls and drive safely
- Get recommended vaccines and screening tests
- Be tobacco free
- Manage stress

Apply the Health Living Messages by reviewing “Wellness Classes and Groups” found under RESOURCES on the right side of the VASFHCS wellness web page.

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