

8 Dimensions of Wellness

Source: <https://www.samhsa.gov>



Wellness is "a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity" (World Health Organization). The **Wheel of Wellness**, with 8 *interdependent* dimensions reminds us that adult life is complex and comprised of multiple domains of simultaneous focus. At any given time, these domains are active whether one is conscious of it or not. These domains influence/affect each other as well. For example, being excited about moving to a new city (environmental domain) can motivate one to put effort into making friends (social domain). Conversely, if one is feeling lonely because they don't know anyone in their new city (social/emotional domain), they may lose their appetite and impact physical well-being. What's valuable to know is that if you intentionally impact one domain with a positive action, the other domains will also be elevated! Use this wheel as a **tool for self-assessment and reflection**. Notice *what is going well in life*, notice *the challenges*. Through an honest look at your wellness wheel, you gain clarity on next steps and can discover healthy, innovative solutions to the natural ups and downs of life.

8 (Interdependent) Dimensions of Wellness Examples

“Wellness” contains multiple dimensions: social, physical, emotional, intellectual, existential (spiritual), occupational, financial and environmental. Inner resilience, which is necessary to face the inevitable challenges of life, can be amplified by putting awareness, attention and effort into these areas of life as appropriate. Some examples include:

Social Wellness

- Pursuing satisfying relationships with others
- Respecting differences of other groups and individuals
- Engaging in effective ways of resolving conflicts
- Contributing to the common welfare of the community
- Recognizing that one’s self and society are interdependent
- Understanding of personal & social identity within larger community

Physical Wellness

- Pursuing healthy, safe practices in areas of exercise, sleep, nutrition and sexuality
- Engaging in self-care behavior which promotes thriving and prevents illness/disease

Emotional Wellness

- Being aware of and accepting one’s own feelings and the feelings of others
- Experiencing self-esteem and appreciating one’s life
- Paying attention to, expressing and managing one’s emotions appropriately
- Managing stress and dealing with difficult decisions effectively

Career Wellness

- Preparing for and entering work that is consistent with one’s personal interests and values
- Gaining satisfaction from work that is personally enriching and rewarding
- Expanding and evolving one’s skills and interests throughout life

Intellectual/Creative Wellness

- Engaging one’s mind in creative and stimulating activities
- Using resources to expand knowledge and improve skills
- Adapting to changes, new information, differing perceptions and approaches

Financial Wellness

- Obtaining, managing and maintaining finances
- Paying bills, allocating finances appropriately
- Healthy relationship with money

Environmental Wellness

- Acting with recognition of the interdependence of self, society and the natural environment
- Accepting personal and social responsibility for promoting ecological well-being
- Making environmentally sound choices concerning the workplace, home and neighborhood
- Maintaining home/work/study space in a way that supports success and thriving

Existential (Spiritual) Wellness

- Values toward meaning and purpose in life – outside of or within the context of religious tradition
- Respecting life’s progression and significance
- Developing trust, integrity, accountability and an ethical approach to life
- Understanding personal and social identity (including ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, etc.)

Learn more about concepts of well-being from a public health perspective:

Check out the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) – U.S. National organization for public health promotion and practice.

Visit:

<http://www.cdc.gov/hrqol/wellbeing.htm>

Do a Wellness Check!

Using the **8 dimensions of Wellness wheel**, go through each domain of your life currently and reflect on what is *giving you energy* and what is *draining your energy*. Notice how these situations are interconnected. As you do this activity, breathe and be present. After a little while you may start to notice insights and solutions arising in your awareness that will help you with your next steps.



+ Energizing

(What are you excited about/grateful for right now? Label the domain.)

- Draining

(What is making you nervous or feel stress right now? Label the domain.)

Interdependence

(What is the impact of your + and – situations on other domains?)