

# Health and Wellness – Class notes

## Health

- The process of achieving individual potential in the physical, social, emotional, mental, spiritual, and environmental areas.

## Wellness

- The achievement of the highest level of health possible in each of the several areas.

## Physical health

- Body size and shape
- Sensory acuity and responsiveness
- Susceptibility to disease and disorders
- Body functioning
- Physical fitness
- Recuperative abilities
- Ability to perform normal activities of daily living

## Intellectual Health

- Think clearly
- Reason objectively
- Analyze critically
- Meet life's challenges
- Learning from successes and mistakes
- Making sound, responsible decisions

## Social Health

- Satisfying interpersonal relationships
- Interactions with others
- Adaptation to various social situations
- Daily behaviors

## Emotional Health

- Feeling competent
- Express emotions when appropriate
- Avoid expressing emotions in an inappropriate manner
- Self-esteem
- Self-confidence
- Trust
- Love

## Environmental Health

- Appreciation of the external environment
- The role individuals play in
  - Preserving
  - Protecting
  - Improving environmental conditions

## Spiritual Health

- Belief in a supreme being or a way of living prescribed by a particular religion
- Feeling of unity with others and nature
- Sense of meaning or value in life
- To care about and respect all living things

## Improving Your Health

- A good night's sleep
- Eat Healthy
- Managing weight
- Participate in physical activities
- Avoiding Tobacco products
- Practicing safer sex
- Limiting alcohol
- Self-exams and medical checkups

## Other ways to improve your health

- Control stressors
- Forming and maintaining relationships
- Making time for yourself
- Have fun every day
- Respecting the environment
- Value each day
- View mistakes as opportunities to learn and grow
- Be kind to yourself and others

## Health and Wellness – Video Script

It's important to be happy and healthy! This lesson will contrast between health and wellness as well as what the different dimension of wellness are and how they interact.

### Being Healthy And Happy

People exercise to be healthy. Others choose to drink to one's health. There is always a new diet or health fad every single year in the world of nutrition or exercise. But rarely do we hear of wellness fads or exercising to be well. It's all about health. Is there a difference between health and wellness?

### Health, Wellness, And Risk Factors

Health is defined as the overall mental and physical state of a person; the absence of disease.

This isn't entirely the same thing as wellness. Wellness refers to the state of being in optimal mental and physical health.

But wellness is more than that. It's about living a life full of personal responsibility and therefore taking proactive steps for one's entire well-being.

This means that a person living life very well controls risk factors that can harm them. Risk factors are different types of actions or conditions that increase a person's chances for illness or injury.

Let's take a look at just some risk factors. Smoking is a risk factor. It is a risk factor for developing lung cancer among many other terrible problems. Mountain climbing is a risk factor. It is a risk factor for everything from broken bones to a swollen brain.

Alcohol is a risk factor. It is a risk factor for developing liver damage. Unprotected sex is a risk factor as well. We all know that you can get some very nasty sexually transmitted diseases with unprotected sex, including HIV.

### Types Of Wellness

That being said, just like there are many different types of risk factors, there are actually different dimensions of wellness as well - no pun intended there. Actually, there are several of them. Let's take a look at what they are.

One dimension of wellness is physical. This means we exercise, eat well, practice safe sex, don't do any dangerous activities like jumping off of buildings, and so on. Physical fitness increases physical wellness. By being physically fit and well, you are better able to take

care of yourself and others, especially in a time of need. You are also better able to prevent illness and disease.

Another dimension is intellectual: Critical thinking, being curious, and always learning new things. Developing intellectual wellness is critical not only to help a person grow in school and do better at work, but it actually prevents the onset of disease. It's been shown that people who regularly learn new things and challenge their mind can stave off many mental health problems.

A further dimension is emotional: Being confident, having a solid self-esteem, building trust, and being able to understand another's feelings. A person who is emotionally well is aware of their feelings and is able to properly cope with them. Emotional wellness also implies a person can deal well with stressful situations.

Furthermore, there is an interpersonal dimension of wellness: Having good communication skills, the ability to establish good and healthy long-term relationships, and having good relationships with family and friends. Interpersonal relationships are very important in order to maintain a good emotional and physical state of being. We are, of course, 'pack animals,' so to speak, that depend on one another to survive and live well.

There is also a spiritual dimension of wellness: Developing compassion, forgiveness, being caring, having a sense of purpose and meaning in life. Spiritual wellness doesn't automatically imply the need for religion in a person's life. These same things can just as easily be developed and found through things like nature, meditation, volunteer work, and family.

We also have the environmental dimension of wellness: Practicing recycling, reducing waste by decreasing the consumption of unnecessary things like plastic bags, and having clean resources like water and air. Environmental wellness doesn't stop there. Do you work in an unhealthy environment filled with asbestos? Maybe you should switch jobs. Do you live near a factory or plant polluting the water with chemicals that you then drink? Make sure your local water treatment plant takes care of this, get a water filter, petition to close the factory or have them change their ways, or move, all in order to improve your overall wellness.

Other types of wellness include financial wellness, living within our means, and occupational wellness, truly liking what it is that you do.

## **How These Dimensions Interact**

As you probably gathered from a couple examples, these dimensions are not standalone. If there's a kink in the armor of one of them, the others may be impacted. Let's take a look at one example of how.

Let's say you are emotionally not doing very well for any reason. If you're feeling down, then you may not feel all that excited about your job, impacting occupational wellness. You may go out on a buying binge, decreasing financial wellness. When you're sad, you really don't feel like exercising or learning new things, so physical and intellectual wellness suffer as well.

It's all a big domino effect, and that is why taking proactive steps - in this case talking your problems out with friends, family, religious counselors, or mental health professionals - can help counter not only the negative emotional problems and the domino effects of it but will also help build stronger spiritual and interpersonal wellness at the same time.

## **Lesson Summary**

This lesson discussed health, which is defined as the overall mental and physical state of a person; the absence of disease. We also focused on wellness, which refers to the state of being in optimal mental and physical health.

A healthy person is one that probably actively considers risk factors that can harm them. Risk factors are different types of actions or conditions that increase a person's chances for illness or injury. These include things like smoking, alcohol, and unprotected sex.

Wellness has many different dimensions, including physical, emotional, spiritual, environmental, interpersonal, occupational, financial, and intellectual.