



TRAINING GUIDE



Improve your health, Improve
your life by learning all the secrets
of **Wellness Wheel**



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Introduction

“Are you well?”

We’ve all been asked this question, or have asked others at some point. Usually, it’s an inquiry as to whether we are currently suffering from any illness or ailment, as wellness is generally assumed to be the opposite of illness. But this is far from being the truth.

One way to explain this further is by taking a look at the Wellness Wheel. This allows us to examine different areas of our lives and, by making adjustments and changes, we can improve our overall health in so many ways. We become happier and healthier, which can help us to lead more fulfilling and enjoyable lives.

This guide will help you to learn the importance of wellness wheel in life to ensure an upgraded version of lifestyle.

So let’s get started!

Chapter 1

Wellness is a modern word with ancient roots. The key tenets of wellness as both preventive and holistic can be traced back to ancient civilizations from the East (India, China) to the West (Greece, Rome). In 19th-century Europe and the United States, a variety of intellectual, religious and medical movements developed in parallel with conventional medicine. With their focus on holistic and natural approaches, self-healing and preventive care, these movements have provided a firm foundation for wellness today. Wellness-focused and holistic modalities have gained more visibility since the 1960s/1970s under the writings and thought leadership of an informal network of US physicians and thinkers. As these have evolved, proliferated, and gone mainstream, they have informed the healthy-living, self-help, self-care, fitness, nutrition, diet and spiritual practices that have become a flourishing wellness movement in the 21st century.

What is Wellness?

Wellness is an active process of becoming aware of and making choices towards a healthy and fulfilling life. It is more than being free from illness, it is a dynamic process of change and growth. A good or satisfactory condition of existence; a state characterized by health, happiness, and prosperity; welfare.

“Wellness is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.” – The World Health Organization.



Wellness is the conscious development of the whole self. Embarking on a wellness journey is a process of searching for the appropriate “tools” to make you a healthier and happier human being, plus discovering your own effective methods to use these “tools” for continued growth and development. As there is a great variety on all aspects of life, there are also countless ways to cultivate yourself on an ever-changing path of wellness.

It is important to see that all of the various concepts of wellness should include at least the following precepts:

Holism – your health and well-being are the outcomes of the constant interaction between the several natural dimensions of life and wellness.

Each dimension is interrelated with the others. The aim is to be conscious of yourself as a whole and complete person, living life as fully as possible.

Balance – while acknowledging the constantly changing nature of your life, you look to balance it by giving significant attention to each of the dimensions. Lack of sufficient attention to any one dimension will result in less-than-optimal development as a person, and may possibly lead to chronic unhappiness.

Self-Responsibility – a well person owns up to his or her responsibility for health and happiness and does not allow others to take control over decisions he/she needs to make for him/herself. Self-responsibility presupposes self-awareness, including the process by which one becomes increasingly more aware of both the causes and consequences of his/her behaviour.

Positive and Proactive – wellness requires primarily positive perspectives and values by which to live. It also requires a strong sense of purpose and conscious, deliberate action. These are our starting assumptions, and they have stood well through time. However, they provide merely a simple framework. What you put inside that framework is totally up to you.

Wellness is an individual pursuit—we have self-responsibility for our own choices, behaviours and lifestyles—but it is also significantly influenced by the physical, social and cultural environments in which we live.

What is Wellness Wheel?

The Wellness Wheel is a tool for self-exploration that can help you survey choices or situations that impact your overall wellness.

The wellness wheel is a holistic model that can help individuals enrich their lives by enabling them to become aware of and make choices that will lead to a more successful existence.



Importance of Wellness Wheel Balance

The word “wellness” can be seen marketed everywhere we look: commercials, magazines in the grocery aisle, and even food packaging. Despite the heavy marketing, wellness is more than a buzzword or trend. Wellness is an active process of making choices toward a healthy and fulfilling life. Who doesn’t want that? By managing all the aspects of wellness wheel, we can achieve a high quality life.

Wellness Wheel is especially important as we age because regular exercise and proper nutrition can help prevent a variety of ailments including cardiovascular disease, obesity, and fall risk behaviours.

Additionally, the need for vitamins and minerals increases after age 50, so it's ever important to have a healthy diet. That's why Firelaunchers is dedicated to provide wellness resources to the community. Wellness is at the core mission: to improve the quality of life for people at risk of losing their independence.

- Each person constantly needs to adjust their Wellness Wheel. This helps them maintain a balance that works for their personal situation, experience, and personality.
- Self-care means permitting yourself to pause, and wellness redirects it.
- It helps in providing an outlook for living a better life by making positive choices and eliminating the unhealthy life patterns.

It's important for you to be conscious of your wellness wheel because if it isn't balanced, you lack the ability to productively handle daily stress.

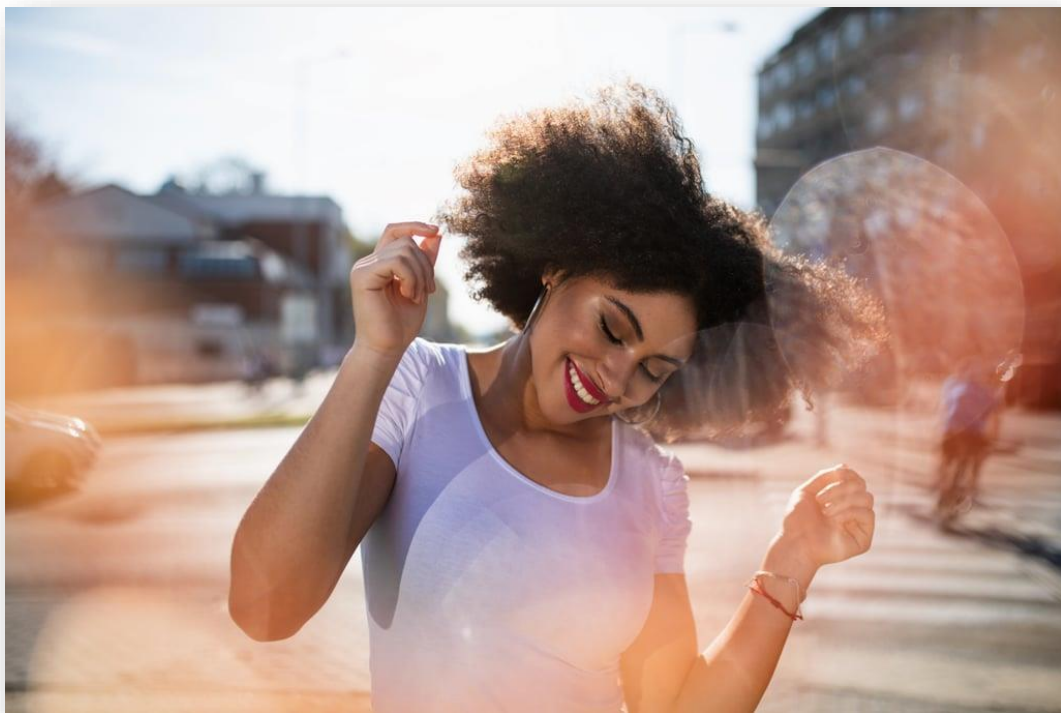
Having an unbalanced wheel is similar to having a flat tire. You struggle to steer straight and in the right direction. Life is bumpy and shaky.

Many times, you are unable to reach your destination and your goals.

Whenever you feel the need to hit the reset button in your life; try opting for the wellness wheel.

Chapter 2

Wellness is a broad spectrum that includes all aspects of being alive. By creating “health” in every aspect of wellness, you’ll find yourself improving your life, your body, and your overall well-being.



Dimensions of Wellness Wheel

The dimensions of wellness include:-

1. Body
2. Food
3. Rest
4. Water

5. Sun
6. Air
7. Mind-set
8. Career
9. Relationships
10. Finances
11. Spirituality
12. Purpose

You'll find a new dimension of health and wellness that you might have never thought possible before. Some interpretations of wellness don't include all of these elements or may try to combine them together, but we feel that this is the most comprehensive, holistic way to think about wellness.

We combine these 12 elements in Wellness 360 to create the most inclusive view of wellness possible. They are further grouped and majorly classified in 8 dimensions which caters to the Wellness Wheel.

1. Emotional Wellness
2. Financial Wellness
3. Social Wellness
4. Environmental Wellness
5. Physical Wellness
6. Intellectual Wellness
7. Spiritual Wellness
8. Occupational Wellness



How Does The Wellness Wheel Works?

Better understand how all areas of health must be functioning well in order for a person to experience optimal health. Identify key areas of well-being that need attention to determine the best solution.

It can be easier to feel emotionally balanced when our sense of social wellness or physical wellness are maintained.

The wellness wheel makes it easy for individuals to identify areas of their lives in which they are thriving, as well as those in which they are struggling by encouraging them to reflect on each of the dimensions of wellness.

The core principle behind the wheel of wellness is that balance is key to achieve a state of wellbeing. Since it is a visual aid, the wellness wheel can help you clearly identify areas of wellness in your life that are probably neglected or that have been left unchecked for some time. If this is the case, you might be feeling unstable, stressed, anxious, or simply unwell.

Keep in mind that life is not static. Neither is your wellness.

The wheel of wellness is a tool that you can use periodically to evaluate how you are doing over time and how your wellbeing has changed and is impacting your goals and life.

How are all the Dimensions Inter-Related to Each Other?

Wellness is a full integration of physical, mental and spiritual well-being. It is a complex interaction that leads to quality of life.

Wellness is commonly viewed as having eight dimensions. Each dimension contributes to our own sense of wellness or quality of life, and each affects and overlaps the others.

For Instance, poor physical health can result in an unhealthy body composition, which in turn, may lower your self-esteem. A low self-esteem makes it more difficult to create healthy social bonds.

Poor physical health may also make it more difficult to participate in many social activities. Hence, poor physical wellness have direct as well as indirect impact on other wellness.

Since all dimensions of wellness are interconnected, an imbalance in one area can prevent you from living life to the fullest and maintaining a state of wellbeing.

Therefore, when you lose balance within or between dimensions of the wheel, your sense of well-being decreases and you can experience distress.

Bringing greater attention to one or more areas can help you restore balance in others.



Chapter 3

How wellness wheel helps you achieve a high quality life?

In 1976 Dr. Bill Hettler co-founded the National Wellness Institute. It was based on the principle that humans could live better, healthier lives if they paid attention to balance and awareness in various areas of their lives. This led to Dr. Hettler creating a model known as wellness wheel. The diagram helps to visualize the fact that all these aspects are joined in some way, each of them having an effect on our lives, with us at the centre.

More recently, other wheels have been devised, containing as few as four sections and up to as many as thirty-six! More often than not, though, these wheels will have eight main sections, each one relating to a major area of our lives. At the centre of this wheel is you – the individual – with all these facets radiating around you. To achieve true ‘wellness’, each of these aspects need to be carefully balanced. Think of the wheel on a bicycle; if you attached a weight to the edge, the whole thing is out of balance. Try to ride it and you’d soon discover the effects. After wobbling about for a bit, you would most likely be thrown off. Just as when one

area of your life is neglected, it can become a burden, weighing you down and throwing you off balance. If left unchecked, it could bring all kinds of problems, whether physical, mental, emotional or spiritual.

The theory is simple; balance the different areas of your life, and you'll start to find that your life will improve.

What are the most common causes of poor Wellness Wheel Balance?

Wellness consists of many factors that affect our overall mental and physical well-being. Our choices and decisions can help us to live a more balanced life filled with a strong sense of personal wellness. No matter what age you are now, you still have many opportunities to improve your personal wellness. One great tool for navigating your personal wellness is a Wellness Wheel. Each person designs his or her own wheel. It helps visually show which aspects of life are going well and where there is room for improvement. People tend to divide their wheel into overarching dimensions.

Few of the most common causes of poor wellness wheel is:-

- Poor Stress Management
- Being lethargic
- Sedentary lifestyle
- Unhealthy eating
- Being indoors for too long
- Lack of quality time with close ones
- Improper work life balance
- Poor mental health in workplace
- Little knowledge about maintaining finances

- No greenery in the surroundings
- And much more.....

While we need to maintain wellness throughout our lives, different stages of our lives call for different areas of focus to be more prominent than others. As we retire we may decrease our occupational focus for more social or emotional focuses. Each person constantly needs to adjust their Wellness Wheel. This helps them maintain a balance that works for their personal situation, experience, and personality. Unbalanced wheels make for a bumpy journey. So try avoiding them and aim for a better living.

Tips to improve your Wellness Wheel Balance

While there is no single formula to help you live comfortably in your golden years, here are 5 key areas to focus on to ensure improved wellness.

1. Financial Planning – Cash flow management is crucial for



retirees. It is important, even if you have retirement savings, that you understand how much money is coming in versus how much is going out. This will help you live within your means

and make financially wise decisions, like downsizing if you need to. You may be in great health right now, but we become more susceptible to illness and injury as we age. That's why it is important to invest in a good health insurance plan to ensure that

you don't financially struggle in the event of an injury or illness. Plus consider your debt before you retire. Try to assure before retiring when possible that loans, mortgages, and credit card bills are paid off. That way they are not eating away at your limited income streams once you stop working.

2. Eat Right – Healthy eating can make a big difference as you age.

It not only keeps you healthy but can help decrease your risk for some illnesses. Our expert Guides recommend having a colourful diet full of fruits and vegetables, alongside whole grains and protein. If you have certain conditions that restrict what you can eat, ask a nutritionist to help you with your meal planning.

3. Stay Active – Exercising has both physical and mental benefits –

it strengthens your body while also helping to put you in a good mood. Low-impact exercises like stretching, strength training, and walking help reduce the risk of problems like fractures and joint pain. By staying active and eating well you can help reduce your risks for many age-related conditions.

4. Care For Your Mind – Learning new things is the best way to



help care for your brain. Picking up a new hobby, learning a new language, or trying new things increases the brain's neuroplasticity. More neuroplasticity helps you maintain cognitive

health. Even if you have physical limitations you can learn and

connect with others virtually. This can help improve your mood and your brainpower.

5. Foster Relationships – Stay connected with family and friends either in person or through social media. Ensuring you have a wonderful community of people to grow and thrive with helps your health. It is common to feel isolated once children move out, as people relocate, or if you move. Our communities often shift in retirement and other times throughout life. Thanks to technology you can maintain contact with cherished friends and family. Social media and virtual communities can help you meet other like-minded individuals. Online classes or joining local community groups are other great ways to grow your community. There are lots of people in the world just waiting to learn from you and hear your stories. Thanks to technology we can connect with these people regularly. Make sure you form a strong community by combining local relationships and virtual relationships. This helps to combat loneliness and feelings of isolation that can cause depression.

Regular routines focused on these key areas help us to keep our bodies and minds fit. Plus now there are great technologies that can help you not only stay connected but stay healthy.

So take some time to put together your own Wellness Wheel. If you have questions or any concerns regarding your physical or mental health, consult a doctor so you're sure you're on the right track. But, as you build your routine make sure you take full advantage of the great technology resources out there to help you age well!

Chapter 4

- What is your living space doing for your overall health and happiness?
- Is your home clean, inviting, and well organized, or is clutter making you a little crazy?
- Do you spend time outdoors each day to energize your vitamin reserves with sunlight, while also using sun protection when necessary?
- Are you mindful of your impact on your local environment?
- Whether you consider yourself religious or not, what is it that you believe, and do you feel able to live your life according to those beliefs?
- How do you put your morals and ethics into action?
- Do you engage in meditation, yoga, or other self-care rituals?
- These are some of the questions to think about and analyse yourself for the spiritual wellness.
- These are some of the questions to think about and analyse yourself for the environmental and spiritual wellness.

Overview

What is Environmental Wellness?

Environmental wellness is a process that involves learning about and contributing to the health of the planet. This involves establishing a sustainable lifestyle, protecting natural resources, and eliminating pollutants and excessive waste.

Environmental wellness also includes having respect for and awareness of your surroundings



and playing an active role in your community. Environmental wellness encompasses not just our relationship with the planet and

nature but our relationship with our personal surroundings as well. When our personal surroundings are well cared for, clean and organized, we experience a greater sense of comfort and less anxiety. Being environmentally well enhances your personal health, and helps ensure the future health of our communities and the world.

Importance of environmental wellness

The core principle of environmental wellness is respect — respect for all nature and all species living in it. It does not mandate that you join a movement or organization, but it does encourage you to practice habits that promote a healthy environment.

When you become environmentally aware, you will be able to realize how your daily habits affect the environment. Improving this dimension of wellness is simple and results in a more balanced lifestyle.

Environmental wellness is important for many reasons. Firstly, it allows us to protect the planet earth. Unfortunately, pollution is a very real

problem. And while there isn't an easy fix, we can all do our part to help resolve this global issue!

Another reason environmental wellness is important is it conserves natural resources. There is only so much air, water, wood, and oil to go around. In fact, many natural resources are limited as it is. We need to be mindful of this as we work, live, eat, and play.

Lastly, environmental wellness is important because it allows us to live safely. Honestly, some environmental factors are dangerous. Therefore, we need to be proactive and protect ourselves from the natural dangers of this world.

How to contribute to environment and community?

1. Keep your garden or green space chemical free

Cut down on your use of herbicides and pesticides. These chemicals kill butterflies, moths and other pollinating insects, such as ladybirds, beetles and spiders – the natural enemies of your garden pests.

More than three-quarters of the UK's butterflies have declined in the last 40 years and evidence suggests that neonicotinoid pesticides, in particular, are one of the causes of these declines.

2. Don't buy single-use plastics



Pop a flask or reusable bottle in your bag next time you are out and about. Make this a habit and cut your weekly bottle buying altogether, stopping 52

bottles ending up in landfills and oceans.

More than 2,600 plastic bottles a year would be stopped from entering our environment altogether if just 50 people packed a flask instead of buying a bottle. Small changes can make a big difference.

3. Shop locally, shop organically

If you have the chance, buying fresh organic food is a great way to support local farmers, reduce your carbon footprint and support nature with your food choices.

4. Record the wildlife near you

Recording the wildlife where you live provides vital information which helps conservationists protect the environment. The information is used by the government to reveal the health of the environment at national, UK and European levels.

5. Re-use and Recycle

Reducing the amount of “stuff” you consume has the greatest benefits for the planet. It’s best to avoid waste in the first place, so think more carefully about your purchases.

Re-using items saves the natural resources and energy needed to manufacture new ones - as well as saving money.

6. Reduce your carbon footprint

Even the smallest effort to reduce your carbon footprint can



make a difference. On short journeys why not ditch the car in favour of walking or cycling, could you car pool with a colleague to get to work or use public transport instead?

7. Avoid peat-based composts

A healthy peat land bog can store huge amounts of rainwater which can reduce flooding risk. Bogs are also very valuable in the fight against climate change as they lock up vast amounts of carbon. In fact, they can store far more carbon than trees.

8. Inspire others

Helping to save insects and other wildlife can be fun whether you are five or 105. Share your love of the natural world with those around you, encourage your family and friends to take part in outdoor activities.

Encouraging others to see the value and beauty of nature and its wildlife may be the most important way to help save it.

Signs of environmental wellness

- Being aware of the impact of your decisions on the environment.
- Working with your community to make improvements.
- Caring for the environment by following the four R's (reduce, re-use, re-think, recycle).
- Being aware of risks in various settings (i.e. going out at night, travelling to new places).
- Leading a lifestyle that is respectful of and in harmony with your environment.
- Recognizing the need to keep a healthy personal environment.

A healthy personal environment includes:

- Surrounding yourself with people and things that you find positive and inspiring.

- Participating in your community.
- Caring for personal belongings and maintaining comfortable working and living spaces.

How to improve environmental wellness?

- Protect yourself and others from environmental hazards such as noise, air and water pollution, second hand smoke, ultraviolet radiation.
- Walk or ride your bike (weather permitting) whenever possible.
- Recycle and reduce waste.
- Conserve energy by using energy efficient light bulbs and appliances.
- Print less. Try reading online or sharing reading materials with classmates.
- Eat locally produced food.
- Save water. Turn off the water when brushing your teeth, shaving, or scrubbing the dishes.
- Use a reusable coffee cup, water bottle and lunch container
- Unplug and turn off electronics and turn down the heat at home, school and work.
- Purchase products in bulk when possible to reduce packaging waste. Use reusable bags or paper bags when shopping.
- Use toxic free cleaning materials and personal care products.
- Join an environmental organization.
- Educate yourself on environmental issues.

A timely and appropriate one for our current situation, with so much negative news about the plight of our planet.



What is Spiritual Wellness?

Spiritual wellness is being connected to something greater than yourself and having a set of values, principles, morals and beliefs that provide a sense of purpose and meaning to life, then using those principles to guide your actions.

Finding meaning and purpose may be a lifelong process that evolves based on unique circumstances, individual experiences and global events. Along with the other dimensions of wellness, a person's level of spiritual wellness often fluctuates throughout their life. It is natural to experience a variety of emotions along the path to spiritual wellness – both positive (hope, forgiveness, acceptance, and joy) and negative (doubt, fear, disappointment, conflict).

Spiritual wellness has the power and capability to make our decisions and choices easier, ground us during periods of change and give us the resiliency to survive with grace and inner peace in the face of adversity. Having a spiritual element in our lives may even help us heal when suffering from a physical or mental condition.

Few characteristics of spiritual wellness are:

- Belief and Meaning
- Vocation and Obligations
- Experience and Emotion
- Courage and Growth
- Ritual and Practice
- Community
- Authority and Guidance



This is probably the most personal of all the aspects of this wellness wheel. Spirituality means something different to everyone—and many people consider it a totally private matter.

Importance of Spiritual Wellness

When you achieve spiritual wellness, you have made peace with your life. You look at obstacles as opportunities and know that no matter what happens, it is all a part of the journey. This mind-set allows you to be flexible and adaptable, solving problems as they arise. These skills in turn help you achieve your goals faster, create healthy relationships, make tough decisions and be fully present to enjoy your life.

Spiritual wellness uses the law of attraction to create a cycle of positivity in your life. When you emanate positivity and peace, you bring more of it into your life. When you have a healthy relationship with yourself, you'll attract others who also respect you. When you lead from the heart, you invite others to do the same. So what is spiritual health, really? It's everything

The Development of Belief Systems and Values

Every person has a set of personal beliefs and ideas. These may include beliefs about spirituality and religion. Many affected by cancer find that the cancer journey deepens their beliefs. It can even change the way they think about life.

Having a belief system can offer a sense of comfort, purpose and connection to others. This is especially true during challenging times. Beliefs may affect the healing process and improve quality of life.

For some, sharing thoughts and feelings can make adjusting to cancer easier. It might also lessen anxiety. The result can be an increased sense of well-being and personal growth.

Signs of Spiritual Wellness

- Developing a purpose in life.
- Having the ability to spend reflective time alone.
- Taking time to reflect on the meaning of events in life.
- Having a clear sense of right and wrong, and acting accordingly.
- Having the ability to explain why you believe what you believe.
- Caring and acting for the welfare of others and the environment.
- Being able to practice forgiveness and compassion in life.

How to improve spiritual wellness?

There are hectic days filled with long to-do lists that leave us little room for downtime and reflection. No matter our environment, our minds are constantly buzzing with thoughts and responsibilities. As we move from

one task to the next, we can become consumed by the craziness of our lives, and we begin to lose sight of what we're most passionate about.

Without a clear sense of direction, you might slip into feelings of apathy and hopelessness. So how do we refocus and prepare for future challenges with courage? How do we handle daily ups and downs with calm optimism?

Here are some of the ways:

1. Explore your spiritual core



By exploring your spiritual core, you are simply asking yourself questions about the person you are and your meaning. Ask yourself: Who am I? What is my purpose? What do I value most? These questions will lead you down a road where you will think

more in-depth about yourself and allow you to notice things about yourself that will help you achieve fulfilment.

2. Look for deeper meanings

Looking for deeper meanings in your life and analysing occurring patterns will help you see that you have control over your destiny. Being aware of this can help you achieve a happy and healthy life.

3. Try yoga

Yoga is a physical technique that can help improve your spiritual



wellness by reducing emotional and physical strains on your mind and body. Yoga is taught at all different levels and can help lower stress, boost the immune system, and lower blood pressure as well as

reduce anxiety, depression, fatigue, and insomnia.

4. Get it out

Expressing what is on your mind will help you to maintain a focused mind. After a long day or a significant event, you may feel confused and not be able to make sense of your feelings. By writing down your thoughts, you may be able to think clearer and move forward.

5. Travel



It's true! Taking time for yourself to travel to a comforting place or somewhere new can do wonders for your mind. When you are at a place where your mind can keep out distractions

and help you reflect and rest, you will have a better connection with yourself. This allows you to weed out stressors and set your mind on the right path for overall wellness. Some activities to take

part in when on a trip can be exercising, speaking with a counsellor or advisor, meditation, or taking a temporary vow of silence.

6. Take time to meditate

While managing your time and daily tasks can be hard, it is crucial to devote time to connecting with yourself. Whether in the morning when you wake up, during your lunch break, or before you go to sleep, take five to 10 minutes to meditate each day.

Fitting mediation and relaxation into your lifestyle will free your mind and foster a stronger relationship with your spiritual wellness.

If we slow down, reflect, re-energize and cultivate purpose in our life, we rediscover our why. Many spiritual practices have a long history of using inward reflection to increase spiritual connection, compassion, empathy and attention.

Chapter 5

- Do I listen and consider the perspectives of others?
- Am I a curious person and seek out opportunities to learn or develop a new skill?
- Do I regularly search for stimulating mental activities?
- Do I enjoy sharing my knowledge with others?
- Do I like seeking out new challenges?
- Do I engage in self-development activities?
- Am I a lifelong learner?
- Do you see stress as something you can learn from or something to avoid?
- Are you aware of your bodily sensations, emotions, and behaviours when you are stressed?
- Do you allow yourself to experience emotions, just as they are?
- How do you care for yourself on a daily basis?
- Are you able to ask for help when you need it?

These are some of the questions to think about and analyse yourself for the intellectual and emotional wellness.

Overview

What is intellectual wellness?

Intellectual wellness means striving toward good mental health, continued intellectual growth, and creativity in life. This can include continued learning, practicing problem solving, improving verbal skills,

keeping abreast of social and political issues, and reading books, magazines, and newspapers.

An intellectually well person:

- Cherishes mental growth and stimulation.
- Is involved in intellectual and cultural activities.
- Is engaged in the exploration of new ideas and understandings.
- Has the ability to problem solve, explore creative expression, adopt new ideas, think critically and pursue topics of personal interest.

Importance of intellectual wellness

Intellectual wellness is important because it helps people achieve a more balanced life. Exploring new ideas and understanding a variety of subjects makes you more mindful and a better-rounded person.

Having an optimal level of intellectual wellness inspires curiosity and exploration. Curiosity is important because it motivates you to try new things and develop an understanding of how you see the relationship between yourself, others and the environment.

Having intellectual wellness arguably makes someone a better member of society. That is because when you are interested in learning new things and having new experiences, you become aware of the world around you.

When someone is aware of other cultures, people, and situations, they are more sympathetic to other people's experiences. It makes people more empathetic of others and aware about how their actions affect the world, making them a better global citizen.



How to become aware of what you are and what you value?

Developing your self-awareness helps you learn more about yourself and what you're capable of. There are some great ways you can work on your self-awareness, but what you do then is entirely up to you.

This can help if:

- you want to know more about yourself
- you want to develop good self-esteem
- you don't understand other people's reactions to stuff that you're doing.

Self-awareness is really just about being aware and confident of who you are. It can relate to knowing your own values, beliefs, personal preferences and tendencies.

You know how famous people always say, 'Stay true to yourself'? This is really important advice, but it's not easy to stay true to yourself if you

don't know who you are. By knowing yourself and understanding your strengths and limitations, you open up opportunities that just aren't available otherwise. You're also able to have more honest and genuine relationships because the people that you're attracted to will be attracted to you for who you actually are.

These are some of the ways to become aware of what you are and what you value:

1. Assess your self-talk

The first step in knowing yourself is to listen to yourself. What's going on in your mind? Is it a series of negative thoughts that make you feel pretty crappy? Or are you always looking on the bright side?

In practice: Take a couple of minutes each day to sit in silence and listen to the tone of your inner voice. One way of getting your inner voice going is to stand in front of a mirror and hear what you're saying to yourself about how you look. It might even help to write down your thoughts so that you can get a better idea of how positive or negative they are.

2. Use your senses



Your senses (sight and sound, in particular) can provide you with huge insights into your own and other people's feelings, and situations in general. But these senses are often viewed through the filter of our self-talk. For example, a frown doesn't always mean that someone's angry, and a groan doesn't necessarily mean that

the person you're talking with is bored, despite what your inner voice might be saying.

In practice: The next time you feel that someone is judging you, or has made you feel bad about yourself, take a step back and write down why you think this. Ask yourself, 'Could I have interpreted what was said/done differently?' You might find that your interpretation was clouded by your own negative thoughts.

3. Tune into your feelings

This can be hard if you're not the kind of person who likes to think too deeply about your feelings. Your feelings are spontaneous and emotional responses to the things you experience. Like your senses, they give you good information about what's going on around you, should you choose to tune into them.

There are some physical signs that you can look for that might help you to 'read' your feelings. They include:

1. A warm feeling in your face might mean you're embarrassed.
2. A feeling of 'butterflies' in your tummy can mean you're nervous.
3. Clenching your teeth might mean you're angry.

Goals for Intellectual wellness

- Expand your ability to create, develop, analyse, critique, concentrate, understand, evaluate, problem solve, predict, comprehend, and more.
- Feel competent in intellectual and academic activities by improving your skills in academics, studying, time management, stress .management, note taking, listening, and public speaking.

- Develop a love for learning and philosophy for “life-long learning”.

How to improve intellectual wellness?

If you want to grow in life and be successful, finding a way to increase your intellectual capacity may be your secret weapon.

1 – Reading as much as possible

Most highly successful people read 60 books a year. Reading doesn't have to be informative. Reading about something you enjoy, can improve your intellect by stretching your mind to think about things you normally don't think about. Listening to audio books is another great option and allows you to continue other activities like driving.

2 – Journaling often for personal growth



More people are journaling thanks to mental health awareness. Journaling allows you to express your thoughts genuinely without any judgment. This helps you make sense of how you are feeling, which aids in self-awareness. You develop

intellectual awareness when you write your thoughts, feelings and emotions. By keeping a record, you can evaluate your personal growth.

3 – Traveling to be exposed to cultural awareness

Traveling helps you experience other people's culture in the rawest form. You get exposed to other people's daily lives, their economic activities, how they worship, among other elements that make up culture. This

challenges you to understand other people and how their environment influences them.

4 – Exercising your body and mind

Exercising is not only important for your physical health. It also helps your brain to stay sharp. The brain is like anything else in your body—you either use it or you lose it. We actually get a brain boost through physical activity. Research has proven exercise positively effects brain function on multiple fronts by increasing the size of the brain and improving general health.

5 – Sleeping well for optimal performance



When we are sleep deprived, it puts our performance in jeopardy and it impacts everyone around us. Research has shown that sleep deprivation is the antithesis of optimal intellectual

performance. Studies have shown that working through the night has the same effect on the brain as being intoxicated. Getting enough sleep is crucial for optimal functioning.

6 – Playing games for brain stimulation

Most games require you to have a strategy to win. It's not always about luck, especially while playing games like chess. You continuously think on your feet about your next move. This stimulation of the mind improves your intellectual wellness over time. While playing with others, you learn to observe their body language and relate it to the actions they make. Games are an excellent way to interact, share, and challenge ideas.

7 — Learning a foreign language

Because language is complex, speaking or learning a foreign language gives your brain a good workout. Learning another language is one of the most effective and practical ways to increase intelligence, keep your mind sharp, and has the added benefit of increased tolerance, because in learning a new language you also learn about the culture in which the language operates.

8— Visiting a local museum



Find a science, art, or history museum nearby and spend the day exploring the exhibits. Whether it is a museum you have visited before or somewhere new, you will likely see and learn about things you did not know about before. Visit with someone

else and talk about what you see, what you liked, and what you did not. Remember, part of intellectual wellness is sharing your knowledge with other people.

9 — Playing musical instrument

Playing music can increase your intellectual wellness because playing music taps into different parts of our brain than other things. If you already know how to play a musical instrument, play it! Learn new songs or play songs you already know. If you have never played an instrument, there is no time like the present to learn how. The type of musical instrument does not make a difference. Any instrument will give your brain a boost.

10 — Attending a performance

Attending a music or dance performance, a poetry reading, or a cultural performance or festival. Any type of performative experience expands your intellectual wellness by exposing you to something new. Even attending a concert, which most people might not think of as something intellectual, is good for your mind.

Intellectual wellness is about being curious about the world and expanding your horizons. The more you learn, and the more you share your knowledge with others, the better you do for yourself and the world.

It is never too late to expand your intellectual wellness. Challenge yourself to pick up reading again even if you cannot remember the last time you read a book for fun. Dig out that guitar you played in college and start playing again. Go to a concert, a play, a ballet performance, or check out the symphony.

Expanding your intellectual wellness makes you a better version of yourself.

What is emotional wellness?

Emotional wellness, which is also known as emotional health or emotional wellbeing, is a person's ability to handle their emotions and the varied experiences they encounter in life. The National Center for Emotional Wellness defines emotional wellness as "an awareness, understanding and acceptance of our feelings, and our ability to manage effectively through challenges and change."

It focuses on thoughts, feelings, and the ability to have an optimistic view on life and how to express and process emotions. When negative

emotions arise, it is important that you have an outlet to express them in a safe way.

Emotional wellbeing involves the social, mental, psychological and spiritual aspects of people's lives.

This includes forming and maintaining satisfying and healthy relationships, taking another's perspective, resolving interpersonal conflict, feeling capable and whole, expressing emotions, navigating stress and having a positive sense of self—including developing a healthy sense of identity related to race and ethnicity, gender, sexuality, disabilities, spirituality and other aspects of human differences.

An important part of our social and emotional health is our capacity for emotional wellness.



Importance of emotional wellness

Emotional wellness is important because how you feel impacts every aspect of life. For example, if you're sad or depressed, it can impact your personal and professional relationships as well as your overall quality of

life. Also, if you have a difficult time managing stress or expressing your emotions, this can decrease your general well-being and lead to avoidable health problems.

On the other hand, those who are emotionally in check are able to best interpret and express their feelings. As a result, they're able to feel comfortable in their own skin and develop strong interpersonal relationships, both of which will positively impact them in all aspects of life.

Fortunately, self-care is something that is becoming more and more prevalent these days. With an increase in the ways technology consumes the world and demands our attention, taking the time to step back and really think about your feelings and emotions can keep you true to yourself and prevent mental health problems.

Life is full of ups and downs. It's those who develop a high degree of emotional intelligence and are in touch with their feelings that are in the best position to withstand whatever life throws at them.

Express your emotion as they are

Have you ever left an important conversation kicking yourself for not saying how you felt, or wishing you had just let go and shared your true thoughts?

Many things can make it harder to open up — it might be related to what you're feeling, who you are, and how you relate to others.

While you may understand logically that healthy emotional expression is important, just exactly how to go about it isn't always straightforward.

1. Use positive self-talk

We all have an inner dialogue running through our heads, which is sometimes negative and counterproductive. If you have a negative inner dialogue, this is bound to make healthy self-expression difficult. Consider whether the messages in your head are damaging, and if so, work on ways to replace them with positive ones.

2. Be a good listener



It is hurtful to feel unheard, so listen to your family, friends, and co-workers and you will be in a far better position to respond with expressions of empathy and understanding.

3. Know your triggers

People, situations, and places often hold strong associations. If you find yourself feeling emotionally blocked when it comes to certain triggers, it may be worth avoiding them when possible.

4. Teach emotion words to young children

Children often lack the language ability to express how they feel. By using tools such as faces conveying different emotions, children will be helped to understand the words for different emotions.

5. Practice empathy



Whether among family, friends, or co-workers, practicing empathy creates bonds that enable us to be emotionally in sync with others.

6. Practice acceptance

Try to accept those aspects of your life that are out of your control. Doing so will make you feel better while freeing up your mind to become more emotionally expressive.

7. Be grateful

It is pretty hard to be unhappy while feeling thankful. Appreciate what you have and you will be better able to express a sense of joy.

8. Take a risk

Emotional expression equals risk; it means you are putting yourself in the position of potential rejection. But meaningful conversations and relationships require such risk. So, take a chance and you will be rewarded.

9. Be optimistic



By focusing on the positive, you will find it easier to express yourself in a range of situations while enjoying the many wonders of life.

10. Do some gardening

Gardening is like art; there are endless lovely plants and flowers from which to express your creativity. And besides, who knows what you might find within yourself.

Signs of Emotional Wellness

- Having the ability to talk with someone about your emotional concerns and share your feelings with others

- Saying "no" when you need to without feeling guilty
- Feeling content most of the time
- Feeling you have a strong support network i.e. people in your life that care about you
- Being able to relax
- Feeling good about who you are

How to improve emotional wellness?

1. Be aware of your emotions and reactions

Notice what in your life makes you sad, frustrated, or angry. Try to address or change those things.

2. Express your feelings in appropriate ways

Let people close to you know when something is bothering you. Keeping feelings of sadness or anger inside adds to stress.

3. Think before you act

Give yourself time to think and be calm before you say or do something you might regret.

4. Strive for balance

Find a healthy balance between work and play, and between activity and rest. Make time for things you enjoy. Focus on positive things in your life.

5. Take care of your physical health

Exercise regularly, eat healthy meals, and get enough sleep. Don't abuse drugs or alcohol. Keep your physical health from affecting your emotional health.

6. Connect with others

Make a lunch date, join a group, and say hi to strangers. We need positive connections with other people.

7. Find purpose and meaning

Figure out what's important to you in life, and focus on that. This could be your work, your family, volunteering, caregiving, or something else. Spend your time doing what feels meaningful to you.

8. Stay positive

Focus on the good things in your life. Forgive yourself for making mistakes and forgive others. Spend time with healthy, positive people.

9. Manage Stress

Learn relaxation methods to cope with stress. These could include deep breathing, meditation, and exercise.



You can improve your emotional wellness, that state of being that means understanding and accepting the entire range of human emotions and living well through the ups and downs of life. Emotional wellness is within reach of everybody. It's a skill that is learned and a trait that can be developed rather than something someone is born with or without.

Chapter 6

- Do you eat foods that you enjoy, stay hydrated through the day, and listen to your hunger questions?
- Are you able to keep a consistent sleep schedule and get 7 hours of sleep per night?
- Do you move your body on a daily basis?
- Are you making alcohol, nicotine, and other drugs choices that align with your values?
- Do you have a habit of regularly washing your hands to prevent colds and flu?
- How are you at asking for help?
- Do you surround yourself with people who you can trust and you know care about you?
- Are you able to communicate clearly when dealing with conflict?
- Do you have at least one good friend you can count on?
- Are you okay being alone?

These are some of the questions to think about and analyse yourself for the physical and social wellness.

What is physical wellness?

The ability to maintain a healthy quality life that allows you to perform your daily activities without undue fatigue, and physical stress; and adopting healthy habits such as balanced diet, routine check-ups and exercise.

It is the ability to take charge of your health by making conscious decisions to be healthy.

Physical wellness is a state of being characterized by the full integration of states of physical, mental, and spiritual well-being.

To be physically well, you have form a lifestyle conducive of bringing the body and mind in their top shape.



Importance of physical wellness

Physical wellness is important because your body needs to be healthy so you can perform to the best of your ability in all areas of your life, including academically.

Physical activity is just one aspect of physical wellness. It also includes managing your stress, getting enough sleep, and eating a healthy diet. Many college students struggle with getting enough sleep. Staying up late to cram for an exam or write a paper can be counterproductive

because you will accrue sleep debt. If you are sleep-deprived, your memory will not be as good and you will not be able to learn efficiently or focus your attention. Also, sleep, stress and physical activity are all connected. If you are physically active, you will reduce your stress level and will probably sleep better as well.

How to be Fit for Life?

The five components of fitness are factors that contribute to physical fitness and help guide the process of getting fit. You already know that benefits come when you prioritize physical activity. The trick is understanding what, exactly, "fitness" is and how you can go about achieving it.

Creating a fitness plan that incorporates each of these elements can help ensure that you get the most health benefits from your routine.

1. Muscular Endurance

- It is one of two factors that contribute to overall muscular health. Particular muscle group's ability to continuously contract against a given resistance.
- Long-distance cycling offers a clear example. To continuously pedal a bike over a long distance, often up steep inclines, cyclists have to develop fatigue-resistant muscles in their legs and glutes. These are evidence of a high level of muscular endurance.

- Likewise, holding a plank to develop core strength is another



example of muscular endurance using isometric exercise. The longer you're able to contract your abdominals and hold your body in a steady position, the

greater endurance you have through your hips, abs, and shoulders. The extent to which you choose to focus on muscular endurance should be directly related to your health or fitness goals. It's important to realize that muscular endurance is muscle group-specific.

2. Muscular Strength

- While muscular endurance refers to how fatigue-resistant a particular muscle group is, muscular strength refers to the amount of force a specific muscle group can produce in one, all-out effort. In strength training terms, it's your one-rep max.
- Like muscular endurance, muscular strength is muscle group-



specific. In other words, you may have strong glutes but comparatively weak deltoids; or powerful pectoral muscles but comparatively weak

hamstrings. This is why a well-balanced strength training program that targets all of your major muscle groups is important.

- Consider Your Goals; if your focus is on health, you should be strong enough to lift a heavy box or easily stand up from a chair. If, however, you want to develop muscle mass or to be able to lift heavier weights at the gym, your training regimen should be focused more on lifting heavy weights.
- It's possible to improve muscular strength and endurance at the same time. This can be done in conjunction with cardiovascular training. For instance, circuit-training routines that combine strength exercises and cardio into a single bout of training can make your exercise program more efficient.

3. Flexibility

- Flexibility refers to the range of motion you have around a given joint without pain.
- Like muscular strength and endurance, flexibility is joint-specific. For instance, you may have very flexible shoulders but tight and inflexible hamstrings or hips.
- Flexibility is essential at any age. It plays a role in unhindered



movement and can affect your balance, coordination, and agility.

Maintaining a full range of motion through your

major joints can reduce the likelihood of injury and enhance athletic performance.

- As you get older, the importance of flexibility becomes even more apparent. Think of individuals who are older: Many may walk with a shuffle or have a hard time reaching their arms over their heads.
- This may affect quality of life, making it more challenging to perform activities of daily living, such as reaching items on high shelves, picking up items off the floor, or simply catching their balance if they start to fall.
- While completely stopping the aging process isn't possible, protecting your joints and maintaining mobility can help keep you spry well into your later years.

4. Cardiovascular endurance

It (also known as cardiorespiratory endurance or aerobic fitness) refers to your body's ability to efficiently and effectively intake oxygen and deliver it to your body's tissues through the heart, lungs, arteries, vessels, and veins. By engaging in regular exercise that challenges your heart and lungs, you can:

- Maintain or improve the efficient delivery and uptake of oxygen to your body's systems.
- Enhance cellular metabolism.
- Ease the physical challenges of everyday life.



Given that heart disease accounts for roughly 630,000 deaths in the United States each year, starting a workout program that

enhances cardiovascular fitness is of particular importance. Running, walking, cycling, swimming, dancing, circuit training, and boxing are just a few of the many workouts that can benefit heart health. The key, of course, is consistency. It may sound like a lot, but 150 minutes breaks down to just 20 to 30 minutes of exercise per day, five to seven days a week

5. Body Composition

- Body composition, or your body's ratio of fat mass to fat-free mass, is the final component of health-related physical fitness. Because high levels of fat mass are associated with negative health outcomes, such as heart disease and type 2 diabetes, attaining and maintaining a healthy body composition is a goal of just about all regular exercise routines.
- To see improvements in body composition, you need to know your starting point. Weighing yourself on a scale won't do the trick, as weight alone doesn't tell you the makeup of your internal tissues. Some methods of measuring body composition are more accessible than others.
 - Bioelectrical impedance analysis (BIA)
 - Hydrostatic underwater weighing
 - DEXA (dual-energy X-ray absorptiometry) scans
 - Body fat percentage calculator

Keeping these five elements of fitness in mind can help you reach your fitness goals. Designing a fitness routine that incorporates all of these elements can ensure that you are following a well-rounded workout plan that will boost your health. It is normal to be drawn specifically to a certain element of fitness more than others. Incorporating aspects that

suit your goals and lifestyle is key to maintaining your passion for fitness.

Goals for your Physical Wellness

- Understand how and why your body works
- Feel comfortable with your physical appearance
- Make informed choices about your body and sexuality
- Feel competent at physical activities
- Develop well-balanced and healthy eating habits
- Become a responsible drinker or a non-drinker
- Become aware of how a lack of sleep, stress, and non-activity affect your body
- Become aware of how food, beverages, drugs, chemicals, additives, and caffeine affect your body
- Engage in regular movement to improve flexibility, strength, aerobic, and cardiovascular health.
- Develop and cultivate leisure activities
- Seek medical care when needed for illness, injury and preventative care.

How to improve physical wellness?

1. Get Active

Sedentary behaviour has been linked to many medical problems.

Moving more and sitting less can have major health benefits.

Experts recommend adults get at least 150 minutes (two and a half hours) of moderate physical activity a week. You can benefit from

even a little activity at a time. Every minute counts when it comes to movement.

To increase your activity:

- Set specific goals for your physical activity.
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Park your car at the far end of the street or parking lot.
- Set up your space so you can walk on a treadmill while watching TV or stand when using the computer.
- Set an alarm to go off every hour as a reminder to move around for a minute or two.
- Have small weights in your office or around your home for doing arm exercises.
- Take a walk on your lunch breaks. Or have “walking meetings” with colleagues at work.



2. Maintain your muscle

Building muscle helps you keep up the activities you enjoy at any stage of your life. Some types of strength training keep your bones healthy, too. Experts recommend strength training activities for all the major muscle groups two or more days a week for adults and three for kids and teens.

To build muscle safely:

- Start slowly, especially if you haven't been active for a long time.
- Pay attention to your body. Exhaustion, sore joints, or muscle pain mean you're overdoing it.
- Use small amounts of weight to start. Focus on your form, and add more weight slowly, over time.
- Use smooth, steady movements to lift weights into position. Don't jerk or thrust weights.
- Avoid "locking" your arm and leg joints in a straight position.
- Don't hold your breath during strength exercises.
- Ask for help. Look for a group class at a local gym, recreation center or find a trainer.



3. Find a healthy weight

Keeping your body at a healthy weight may help you lower your risk of heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and certain types of cancer that can result from being overweight or obese. Take charge of your weight and your health.

To reach your weight loss goals:

Eat Healthy

- Eat smaller portions.
- Select a mix of colourful vegetables each day.
- Choose whole grains.
- Go easy on fats and oils.
- Limit added sugars.

Be Active

- Stick with activities you enjoy.
- Go for a brisk walk, ride a bike, or do some gardening.
- Do strengthening activities.
- Get active for just 10 minutes, several times a day. Every little bit counts!

Track your progress

- Keep a food and physical activity diary.
- Be realistic and aim for slow, modest weight loss.



4. Mind your metabolism

Your metabolism changes as you get older. You burn fewer calories and break down foods differently. You also lose lean muscle.

Unless you exercise more and adjust your diet, the pounds can add up. Middle-age spread can quickly become middle-age sprawl.

Carrying those extra pounds may be harming your health.

To combat age-related changes:

- Commit to a healthy diet.
- Limit snacking.
- Drink plenty of water.
- Move more. Take the stairs and add walking breaks to your day.
- Get plenty of sleep.
- Limit alcohol use. Alcohol is high in calories and may worsen health conditions common among older adults.

- Avoid tobacco products. When you quit smoking, you may improve many aspects of your health and are likely to add years to your life.



5. Build healthy habits

We know that making healthy choices can help us feel better and live longer. Maybe you've already tried to eat better, get more exercise or sleep, quit smoking, or reduce stress. It's not easy. But research shows how you can boost your ability to create and sustain a healthy lifestyle.

To build healthy habits:

- *Plan.* Identify unhealthy patterns and triggers. Set realistic goals.

- *Change your surroundings.* Find ways to make healthier choices easy choices. Remove temptations. Work for changes in your community, like safe places to walk.
- *Ask for support.* Find friends, family, co-workers, neighbours, or groups for support.
- *Fill your time with healthy activities.* Try exercise, a favourite hobby, or spending time with family and friends.
- *Track your progress.* Record how things are going to help you stay focused and catch slip-ups.
- *Imagine the future.* Think about future benefits to stay on track.
- *Reward yourself.* Give yourself a healthy reward when you've achieved a small goal or milestone, like a massage.
- *Be patient.* Improvement takes time, and setbacks happen. Focus on progress, not perfection.

6. Eat a healthy diet

We make dozens of decisions every day. When it comes to deciding what to eat and feed our families, it can be a lot easier than you might think to make smart choices. A healthy eating plan not only limits unhealthy foods, but also includes a variety of healthy foods. Find out which foods to add to your diet and which to avoid.

To eat a healthier diet:

- *Eat a variety of foods*—vegetables, fruits, whole grains, beans, nuts, seeds, lean meat, seafood, eggs, milk, yogurt, and cheese.
- Limit foods that are low in vitamins and minerals.

- *Cut down on sugar.* Pick food with little or no added sugar. Use the Nutrition Facts label to choose packaged foods with less total sugar.
- Replace saturated fats in your diet with unsaturated fats. Use olive, canola, or other vegetable oils instead of butter, meat fats, or shortening.
- *Get more fiber.* Increase your fiber intake gradually, so your body can get used to it.
- *Choose more complex carbs.* Eat more complex carbs, like starches and fiber. These are found in whole-grain breads, cereals, starchy vegetables, and legumes.
- *Watch out for foods high in salt.* Use fresh poultry, fish, and lean meat, rather than canned, smoked, or processed. Choose fresh or frozen vegetables that have no added salt and foods that have less than 5% of the Daily Value of sodium per serving. Rinse canned foods.

What is social wellness?

Social wellness involves having a strong support network, feeling connected to other peoples, and having a sense of belonging. Feeling isolated, lonely, or disconnected from others can lead to negative physical and mental health outcomes. Healthy relationships we make with family and friends are essential to our wellbeing, both social, emotional, and spiritual.

Social well-being can be defined as the sharing, developing, and sustaining of meaningful relationships with others. This allows you to feel authentic and valued, and provides a sense of connectedness.

For example, when you work on a team over a period of months, or years, even remotely, you have an opportunity to get to know more about your colleagues than just their skills with a spreadsheet. Some become good acquaintances. You share glimpses of your personal lives and develop routines or inside jokes. They ask you about your sick pet or kid. They notice if you're not there.

Some become friends. You have deeper conversations, about how you got to where you are, or about your hopes and aspirations for the future. You likely see them on bad days when you can lend a hand and on great days when they return the favour. Both of these types of relationships contribute to social well-being by bringing enjoyment and allowing you to be seen, appreciated, and valued for yourself.



Importance of social wellness

We are social creatures who need each other. We evolved from chimpanzees, and still share a common part of the human brain: the

limbic system. This part of the brain is responsible for our desire to be with others, around others, and connected to others. It generates feelings of safety and happiness within us when we are with our “troop.”

Without awareness, development, and maintenance of our social well-being, we run the risk of becoming socially isolated. This is different from choosing to have some time alone to enjoy solitude. Social isolation isn't really a choice. Withdrawal from human relationships becomes a self-reinforcing spiral, as isolation leads to negative feelings of fear and threat that lead to more isolating behaviours. Social isolation leads to loneliness, which can be incredibly damaging. In fact, loneliness can be as harmful as smoking 15 cigarettes per day.

“Friendships are like plants. If you don't water them, they die,” which holds truth in that they require tending. Social connection is such an innate part of the human experience.

How to develop assertive skills?

Everyone wants to be more confident, but not everyone knows how to be assertive. Assertive falls right between passive and aggressive. If you're passive about voicing your opinion, you may come across as submissive. And if you are aggressive with your viewpoint, you may come across as a hostile or, even worse, a bully.

But if you learn to be assertive, you can express yourself without being passive or aggressive, and you will have a better chance of getting what you want.



Here are simple ways to help yourself become more assertive.

1. Understand assertiveness

Assertiveness is an interpersonal skill in which you demonstrate the healthy confidence to stand up for yourself while still respecting the rights of others. When you are assertive, you are neither passive nor aggressive, but direct and honest. You don't expect other people to know what you want, so you speak up to ask for what you need calmly and with confidence.

2. Keep your communication style in line

When it comes to being assertive, communication style is critical, and the key is to be respectful of those with whom you are trying to communicate. Pay attention to your body language as well as the words you say, and make sure you're congruent in your words, body language, and tone. Never expect people to read your mind; if you want something, say so, and if something bothers you, speak

up. Look confident when making a request or stating a preference. Stand up straight, lean in a bit, smile or keep a neutral facial expression, and look the person in the eye.

3. Understand and accept differences

Assertiveness doesn't mean being dismissive of other people's points of view. Just as you state your own opinion, you work to understand other points of view. Don't allow differences to upset you or make you angry; remember that differences don't necessarily mean you are right and the other person is wrong. Try to understand their point of view. Listen respectfully and don't interrupt when they are speaking.

4. Speak simply and directly

When you're practicing assertiveness, it's important to speak in a way that doesn't imply accusations or make the other person feel guilty. Speaking your truth with candour shouldn't mean making others feel wrong. Be simple, direct, and concise, and state what you know to be true for you. When asserting yourself, remember, less is more. Keep your requests free of meandering or long-winded explanations.

5. Exercise the power of "I"

To be assertive without coming across as hostile, use "I" statements. Make it a habit to say things like "I think ... " or "I feel " Never use aggressive language or phrases like "You never... " or "You always.... " These statements trigger other people, leaving them frustrated, and they shut down conversation. "I" statements allow you to be confident and assertive without alienating and eliminating other people.

6. Stay calm

Being assertive might make you feel excited, but excitement can sometimes come across as aggression. Learn to stay cool and calm when expressing yourself; it will make you more confident and allow the other person to relax. Remember to breathe normally and be mindful of body language and eye contact. Be present with each other. Calm mind, calm speech, calm action--it not only gives you confidence, but allows the other person to remain composed as well.

7. Set boundaries

Boundaries are the rules and limits you create for yourself that help you decide what you will and won't allow. You don't want people to walk all over you, but you don't want people to think you are a bully, either. Setting boundaries will empower you to know when you need to say yes and when you want to say no.

Assertiveness is like any other skill--it takes practice and time to get it right. Keep working through each of these techniques and soon you will feel more confident.

Signs of Social Wellness

- Development of assertiveness skills not passive or aggressive ones.
- Balancing social and personal time.
- The ability to be who you are in all situations.
- Becoming engaged with other people in your community.
- Valuing diversity and treat others with respect.
- Continually being able to maintain and develop friendships and social networks.
- The ability to create boundaries within relationship boundaries that encourage communication, trust and conflict management.

- Remembering to have fun.
- Having supportive network of family and friends.

How to improve social wellness?

Just being aware that social well-being is a real and important piece of your overall well-being can make it easier to address. Just like your physical health, you have to make choices and sometimes take deliberate action to improve your well-being.

1. Make connections

There are myriad ways to make new friends at any stage of life.



Did you just get a new job? Great! That comes with new colleagues, some of whom can become friends. Did you just move to a new area? Then you have new

neighbours and a new community of people waiting to meet you. Did you get a new dog? That can mean new acquaintances at the dog park, who can turn into new friends.

2. Take care of yourself while caring for others

Taking care of yourself first is like putting your own oxygen mask on first in an airplane before helping another. By investing in ourselves we show up as



better friends, partners, colleagues, and parents. If you are

providing support for someone who is going through a tough time, ensure you ramp up your own self-care as a proactive measure. Caring for others can take its toll invisibly at first, and later lead to increased stress or burnout. Balance the amount of time you spend by yourself and with time with others. We all need time to recharge — introverts especially!

3. Get active with a friend or family member



Inviting a friend on a dog walk or setting a running goal together contributes to your physical well-being, as well as your social well-being. Shared activities can help you

bond with your social connections. Look into trying something new together, like aerial yoga, a life drawing class, or watching comedy. Nothing bonds better than laughing!

4. Bond with your kids

Your kids are social creatures who love to play, have adventures, and learn. Bonding with them through activities, quiet moments of stillness, and listening can develop your friendship. This is



equally important as your love for one another.

5. Build healthy relationships



Healthy relationships start with clear boundaries. These don't need to be stated outright, but are learned through healthy expressions of what you will and

won't tolerate in a relationship. Tuning into your emotions allows you to feel into whether the relationship is balanced, equal, and healthy. If something is bothering you, openly discuss it with the other person. Having a constructive, calm conversation where you feel heard and valued is a sign of a healthy and strong relationship. Otherwise, it might be time to reassess if the relationship is still beneficial.

6. Shape your family's health habits

Develop regular routines and family traditions that focus on health. Friday night

swimming or

Saturday morning

mindfulness is a

great addition to a weekly pizza night!

You can create new habits whenever you

want. How about

creating a gratitude jar where every day you write something you



are grateful for, and pop it in the jar. At the end of the month, you can reflect on all the positive things that happened!

Modern technology has made it easier than ever to ask friends and family how they are, share content, and speak on the phone with people anywhere in the world. It is important that we have people we can go to during the lows of life, and share joy with during the highs.

In times of difficulty, we all need to feel like we have someone we can talk to. Conversation and listening can be so incredibly powerful at helping people move forward.

It's also important that we hold space for others, and nurture a mutually beneficial and healthy relationship. Be present when a person tells you how they feel, explains what their experience is, and shares their perspective. Try not to devalue or change those things; just listen — this can be incredibly therapeutic.

Our social groups can change as we develop, yet some strong connections stay and grow with us. Sometimes relationships and friendships may fall away as we develop more self-awareness and reach new levels of authenticity. This can be difficult to process, but it is a natural part of life. New friendships and relationships will be formed, and they will better reflect who you are now.

Chapter 7

- How is your bank account looking these days?
- Are you putting money toward your student loans, a down payment on a new home?
- Do financial matters, like whether you'll be able to pay the rent on time or make your next car payment, keep you up at night?
- Do you truly thrive at your current job, or is it just a way to pay the bills until you find something better?
- Do I enjoy going to work most days?
- Do I have a manageable workload at work?
- Do I feel that I can talk to my boss and co-workers with problems arise?
- Do I follow my work life balance?

These are some of the questions to think about and analyse yourself for the financial and occupational wellness.

What is financial wellness?

Financial wellness refers to being financially literate, in charge of your finances, and responsible with your money. Struggling with finances and having an unsettled financial situation is a problem that can cause a lot of stress to you and your family. Staying on top of your finances is important for improving your everyday life. It means the people:-

- Have control over day-to-day finances.
- Have enough cushion to handle most financial emergencies.
- Are out of debt and able to manage their expenses without swiping a credit card.

- Are on track to meet their savings and retirement goals.

	Present	Future
Security	Control over your day-to-day, month-to-month finances	Capacity to absorb a financial shock
Freedom of Choice	Financial freedom to make choices to enjoy life	On track to meet your financial goals

Importance of financial wellness

While money isn't guaranteed to make you happy, taking care of your finances can greatly reduce stress and improve your overall health.

Keeping track of expenses, making a budget and sticking to that budget are important in order to be financially responsible and independent.

Financial wellness is critical because it can help lower stress levels.

Stress related to money can affect every aspect of your life. Your personal and professional productivity could potentially suffer due to financial worry. In fact, this is one of the key reasons that so many employers offer financial wellness programs. Employers are well aware of how stress reduces productivity, and recognize that helping their employees learn about financial wellness can help strengthen the business's bottom line.

Financial wellness can help you in the long run. If you're focused on financial wellness, you're also working on your long-term goals, and as a result, you are likely to enjoy both your present and your future more.

Gen Z & Millenials	Gen X	Baby Boomers & Silent Generation
1 Paying off credit card debt	1 Saving for retirement	1 Saving for retirement
2 Buying my first house	2 Paying off credit card debt	2 Paying off a mortgage
3 Growing savings to pay for unexpected expenses	3 Growing savings to pay for unexpected expenses	3 Paying off credit card debt

Do you know how to manage your money so you know what you have and don't have?

You don't need a higher-paying job or a windfall from a relative to improve your personal finances. For many people, better money management is all it takes to reduce their spending, improve their ability to invest and save, and achieve financial goals that once seemed impossible.

Even if you feel like your finances are stuck in a bad place with no way out, there are a number of things you can do to create a better situation for yourself. Here are few:

- 1. Track your spending to improve your finances**



If you don't know what and where you're spending each month, there's a good chance your personal spending habits have room for improvement.

Better money

management starts with spending awareness. Use a money management app to track spending across categories, and see for yourself how much you're spending on non-essentials such as dining, entertainment, and even that daily coffee. Once you've educated yourself on these habits, you can make a plan to improve.

2. Create a realistic monthly budget



Use your monthly spending habits, as well as your monthly take-home pay, to set a budget you know you can keep.

There's no use setting a strict budget based on drastic changes, such as never eating out when you're currently ordering takeout four times a week. Create a budget that works with your lifestyle and spending habits.

You should see a budget as a way to encourage better habits, such as cooking at home more often, but give yourself a realistic shot at meeting this budget. That's the only way this money management method will work.

3. Build up your savings—even if it takes time



Create an emergency fund that you can dip into when unforeseen circumstances strike. Even if your contributions are small, this fund can save you from risky

situations in which you're forced to borrow money at high-interest rates or possibly find yourself unable to pay your bills on time. You should also make general savings contributions to strengthen your financial security in the event of a job loss. Use automatic contributions such as FSCB's pocket change to grow this fund and reinforce the habit of putting away money.

4. Pay your bills on time every month

Paying bills on time is an easy way to manage your money wisely, and it comes with excellent benefits: It helps you avoid late fees and prioritizes essential spending. A strong on-time payment history can also lift your credit score and improve your interest rates.

5. Cut back on recurring charges

Do you subscribe to services you never use? It's easy to forget about monthly subscriptions to streaming services and mobile

apps that charge your bank account even when you don't regularly use these services.

Review your spending for charges like these, and consider cancelling unnecessary subscriptions to hold onto more money each month.

6. Save up cash to afford big purchases

Certain kinds of loans and debt can be helpful when making major purchases, such as a house or even a car that you need right now.

But for other big purchases, cash offers the safest and cheapest buying option.

When you buy in cash, you avoid generating interest and creating a debt that requires months—or, often, years—to pay back. In the meantime, that saved money can sit in a bank account and accumulate interest that can be put toward your purchase.

7. Start an investment strategy



Even if your ability to invest is limited, small contributions to investment accounts can help you use your earned money to generate more income.

The path to better finances starts with changing your own habits. Some of these changes will be easier than others, but if you stay committed to this transformation, you'll end up with great money management skills that will serve you throughout your life—and in the meantime, you'll have more money in your pocket.

The foundation of good money management is a rock-solid budget.

Signs of Financial Wellness

- Learning how to manage your money and establishing a personal budget.
- Not living beyond your means.
- Making a plan to pay back your student loans.
- Learning about debt and how to manage it.
- Building good credit.
- Thinking long term, e.g. set up a savings account.
- Learning not to let money be the driving force of your life.
- Donating some of your money, if possible, to a cause you believe in.



How to improve financial wellness?

Here are some financial wellness tips that can help you achieve your financial goals:

- **Re-calibrate according to your financial situation**

The most important tip to get started on maintaining your financial wellness is to define clear and timely financial goals for yourself. Remember to be realistic with money! It is not always about over-achieving, it is about being realistic with your spending and creating a steady flow of money. With the upheavals in the market, it is also important to re-evaluate your fiscal goals from time to time.

Rethink what you can achieve on a year-to-year basis. While defining one's money-related goals, it becomes pertinent to think of your debts.

- **Everything You Need to Know About Expense Management**

You should have a clear timeline on how and when you plan to pay off your debts. It should also be a part of your financial goals apart from ideas about expansion and promotion. If you think you have been off track with your money goals for a long time, it might be time to reassess the situation and recalibrate your goals.

- **Evaluate your financial situation periodically**

Keep a regular track of your income, savings, and expenses. Random auditing of your account books might be a smart way to keep control of your tabs. It might be upsetting to acknowledge certain debts and losses but it is definitely better than living in delusion. Make sure you space out your heavy personal purchases between financial years to avoid running into debts. Have your debts reduced over the last year? If yes, then you are in good shape

and you can continue to budget accordingly. But if it's a no, it's time to rethink where you are going wrong!

- **Design and stick to a practical budget**

The first step to designing an efficient budget is to realistically identify your expenses, your income, and your target savings. Monthly bill payments and debts are some of the most important things you need to keep in mind while designing your budget. Unexpected expenses, for example, health emergencies, family events, luxury spending, personal spending, rattle up the monthly finances.

You need to keep track of your expenses and identify your spending leaks. Before investing in a luxury product/service, always ask yourself: do I have the budget to spend on this product/service? And even more importantly, is now the best time to invest in this luxury product/service? Build healthier spending habits by creating a money spending plan. Go back to your financial goals to remind yourself of your financial situation.

- **Build your savings**

Let's talk about your savings. Regular savings go a long way in



ensuring financial security. The first step to meet your targeted savings is to open a high-return savings account at a reputed bank. Your general

mantra should be: save more money, spend less money. Strike the

right balance and you will be surprised to find extra money on your hand.

You can think about putting this cash in your emergency fund. Instead of keeping extra money at home, deposit it in a good savings account and reap the benefits. Using automated banking tools auto-deposit money into your savings account is a good way to ensure maximum savings.

- **Search the right investments**

It is also never too early to get started on investments to help your family in times of need. It creates economic security and reduces fiscal risk. Your investments should ideally have high returns and low risks. Find the right balance and focus on diversifying your investment portfolio.

Investing in mutual funds, insurance plans, pension funds, real estate, senior citizens saving schemes are some ways to kick-start your retirement plan with your investments. If you know you are going to need the money in a few years, invest in short-term, high liquidity assets like peer-to-peer loans or savings accounts.

- **Create an emergency fund**

If there's one thing that the pandemic has made us realize, rather harshly maybe, it is that we need to be prepared for emergencies. Monetary emergencies are no different. You definitely need to have a plan of action for those unprecedented times when you would find yourself struggling to have money in your account. Creating a fund dedicated only for emergencies is just the first step, perseverance is the key! You could also invest in well-researched insurance plans. A well-paying life insurance plan is a must. Design your budget in a manner that it has space for both an emergency fund and a retirement fund.

- **Have a retirement plan**

The best financial wellness tip is to remember it is never too early to be thinking of your retirement plan! The golden tip is: create a



retirement fund and contribute

generously. This might mean that you need to cut back on your purchases and

monthly spending's

but such planning ahead will create financial security in the long run. One of the most important questions is deciding how much you need to save or invest to secure a comfortable life after retirement. Remember that it is always a good idea to plan for more than you may need when it comes to matters of money. Don't think of your retirement fund as your emergency fund, they are different. You could face an emergency once you are retired!

- **Focus on financial education**

Search for financial education programs that suit your portfolio.

Many free versions of these programs are available on the internet.

They could help you understand how money works, how to budget

better, how to build credit and increase savings, and how to reduce

your debt. Here's an obvious tip – if your workplace offers efficient

financial wellness programs, register! There are a lot of financial

wellness tools that aim to improve your financial health.

Not only do they provide standard coaching and appropriate

financial advice but they also focus on custom training and e-

learning to achieve financial wellness. Don't be afraid to get

professional help when it comes to finances. The internet is a great free resource. But if it can't answer all your questions, consider sitting face to face with a professional and discussing your finances. The money you invest today would give greater yields tomorrow.

- **Track your credit card limits and your credit score**

Keeping an eye on your credit card limits is another tip to avoid unexpected risks and achieve financial wellness. Budgeting before making any major spending decisions is an important tip for financial wellness. Regularly checking your credit report also helps you catch hold of identity fraud or any other illegal activity on your credit card. Your credit score is a number ranging from 300 to 850 which serves as a numerical representation of your credit history. The higher your credit score, the lower the risk of you defaulting on a loan. Remember to save your receipts!



Proactively managing your credit report, for example, paying down debt, paying your bills on time, maintaining a good credit

history, and avoiding applying for several loans at a time help maintain a good credit score. High-interest debt, for example, personal loans and credit card debt, harm your credit score.

You can avail a free copy of your credit report from credit reporting agencies once every year. Automated payments are a great way of timely paying loan EMIs and maintaining a good credit score.

- **Think before applying for a loan**

When one needs money during emergencies, loans prove to be the most beneficial financial tool. Whether you are going for a personal loan or for a business loan, you should always be on the lookout for low interest rates. Personal loans are unsecured and that's why they come with high interest rates usually beginning from 11%.

Before deciding on the perfect loan for yourself, take a hard look at your finances.

Look out for prevailing market interest rates for your income group. One of the best financial wellness tips includes going to a bank and securing a lower interest rate. Be wary of random advertisements that promise low interest rates and high loan amounts, they could be fraudulent. Proper due diligence is required before choosing the best loan.

What is occupational wellness?

Occupational wellness is having the ability to achieve a balance between work and leisure time, addressing workplace stress and building relationships with co-workers. It focuses on our search for a calling and involves exploring various career opportunities and finding where one fits. What we do encompasses so much of our time that it is vital that it bring joy and fulfilment to our lives. When we are doing what we love to do, it deepens our sense of meaning and purpose.

Providing meaningful work within your career is how you create Occupational Wellness. Enjoying what you do is one of the biggest influences of workplace wellness.

Occupational wellness inspires us to will gain personal satisfaction and find enrichment in our work. Your attitude about work is a crucial influence for occupational development. Occupational wellness allows you to explore various career options and encourages you to pursue the opportunities you enjoy the most. This dimension of wellness recognizes the importance of satisfaction, enrichment and meaning through work.



Importance of occupational wellness

Developing occupational satisfaction will allow you to communicate your values through involvement in occupational activities that are gratifying for you. It is also important to identify workplace stress in order to practice conflict management. Conflict management is key to achieving an optimal level of occupational wellness. Choosing what your career will be is a very important life choice. Working takes up a majority of your time during the week, so the way you feel about your work contributes to your overall well-being.

Since most people spend a lot of time at work, it's important to make sure you have a sense of pride and accomplishment in what you do professionally. Therefore, before jumping into a career path, I recommend doing your homework and researching what it takes to be successful in that industry. Also, explore what kind of a work/life balance you'll have as well as how colleagues work together in that line of work.

If you are an employer, really think about what you provide your employees. Is there an opportunity for growth within your company? Do your employees feel they work in a positive and safe environment? Do you have programs in place that support their overall health and wellbeing? These are all important things to consider if you want to keep them around.

Whether an employee or an employer, keeping occupational wellness at the forefront of your mind will pay dividends for your professional life.

The balance between work and relaxation

If you're finding it more challenging than ever to juggle the demands of your job and the rest of your life, you're not alone.

Many people are putting in extra hours, or using their smartphones to be on call when they're not physically at work.



A lot of people are having a more difficult time finding balance in their lives because there have been cutbacks or layoffs where they work. They're afraid it may happen to them, so they're putting in more hours.

But even if you don't have much control over the hours you have to work, you can ask yourself: In what other ways am I bringing greater enjoyment into my life?" Brooks says. "Focus your time and attention on things you can control."

1. Build downtime into your schedule

When you plan your week, make it a point to schedule time with your family and friends, and activities that help you recharge.

2. Drop activities that sap your time or energy

Many people waste their time on activities or people that add no value -- for example, spending too much time at work with a

colleague who is constantly venting and gossiping is just drainage of energy.

Her advice: Take stock of activities that don't enhance your career or personal life, and minimize the time you spend on them.

You may even be able to leave work earlier if you make a conscious effort to limit the time you spend on the web and social media sites, making personal calls, or checking your bank balance. We often get sucked into these habits that are making us much less efficient without realizing it.

3. Rethink your errands

Consider whether you can outsource any of your time-consuming household chores or errands.

Could you order your groceries online and have them delivered?

Hire a kid down the street to mow your lawn? Have your dry cleaning picked up and dropped off at your home or office? Order your stamps online so you don't have to go to the post office? Even if you're on a tight budget, you may discover that the time you'll save will make it worth it.

Trade services with friends. Offer to do tasks that you enjoy or that you were planning to do anyway.

4. Get moving

It's hard to make time for exercise when you have a jam-packed schedule, but it may ultimately help you get more done by boosting your energy level and ability to concentrate.

Research shows exercise can help you to be more alert, and I've noticed that when I don't exercise because I'm trying to squeeze in another half hour of writing, I don't feel as alert.

5. Remember that a little relaxation goes a long way

Don't assume that you need to make big changes to bring more balance to your life. It is recommended setting realistic goals, like leaving the office earlier 1 night per week.

Slowly build more activities into your schedule that are important to you. Maybe you can start by spending an hour a week on your hobby of carpentry, or planning a weekend getaway with your spouse once a year.

Even during a hectic day, you can take 10 or 15 minutes to do something that will recharge your batteries. "Take a bath, read a trashy novel, go for a walk, or listen to music. You have to make a little time for the things that ignite your joy.

Signs of Occupational Wellness

- Doing work that you find motivating and interesting
- Understanding how to balance leisure with work
- Working in a way that fits into your personal learning style
- Communicating and collaborating with others
- Working independently and with others
- Feeling inspired and challenged
- Feeling good at the end of the day about the work you accomplished

How to improve occupational wellness?

1. Don't settle

Continuously striving toward a goal at work, whether it be a promotion or successful completion of a project, can make a huge impact on your occupational wellness. Staying engaged and excited

about your work is an excellent way to improve your occupational wellness.

2. Avoid over-working yourself



This can lead to burn-out and often resentment toward your job. It is crucial to find an optimal work/life balance. Setting downtime in your schedule for time with your family and time to treat yourself is imperative

to maintaining a healthy outlook in both your occupational and personal life.

3. Create connections with your co-workers



It's no secret that being surrounded by individuals whom you consider both friends and colleagues makes the workplace a much more enjoyable space. Take the time to get to

know your co-workers to create those bonds.

4. Consider adding some greenery and personal touches to your office space



Research shows that the addition of plants to your office can decrease both stress and noise levels. The addition of photos or a fun calendar can also add colour and a more

personal feel to your space.

5. Take a break



Taking breaks actually improves job performance, and it also helps reduce overall work stress. Just a few five-minute breaks scattered throughout the day can help

strengthen mental focus and clarity. Get up from your desk, stretch, chat with a co-worker and walk around the office for a minute.

Chapter 8

Living in a pandemic requires a new level of resilience to maintain physical and mental wellness. Grief for what has been lost, feeling disconnected from loved ones, and anxiety around the unknown, has taken its toll. Essential workers are at higher risk of being infected, compounding an already fraught situation.



No two people react to crises the same way. Some individuals with depression or bipolar are able to adjust in unexpected ways while others are experiencing a mental health crisis. Some people who did not have a mental health condition prior to the pandemic are feeling symptoms of depression. Seeking help looks very different than it did in past two years—many who are nervous to start therapy under non-pandemic circumstances have extra anxiety around starting the therapeutic process virtually.

Because COVID–19 has had such a large effect on the whole community. It is difficult to maintain a healthy lifestyle when we are in the middle of a crisis like this. The uncertainty, and worries related to finances, childcare, elderly parents, and job security disrupt our routines, our lifestyles and mental health. The uncertainty about the future, the ceaseless news coverage and constant social media driven flood of messages can increase our sense of anxiety. Stress is a normal response to these types of situations. Stress disturbs our sleeping and eating patterns, leads to irritability or emotional outbursts, low motivation, and changes in use of alcohol or other drugs. Please do not hesitate to seek help if you are experiencing anything like this. It is also important to maintain a healthy lifestyle and get back into a routine.

Effect of Pandemic on Wellness Wheel

Environmental Wellness

Stay–in–home orders and quarantines requires us to take a deeper look at how we can find wellness in our indoor and outdoor spaces.

Because we can't predict what's going to happen during this public health crisis, it's important to stay grounded by assessing what's in and what's out of your control in your environment.

- Is there a way to bring the outdoors in? If you don't have a green thumb to take care of plants, pictures of nature can also be effective!
- If you are working from home, have you found a way to separate your workspace from your living space? If you don't have that option, what are ways you can mentally separate the two? Even

simple things like turning your computer off and pushing in your chair can signal to your brain that you are off work.

- Do you have an area in your home that is comforting? If not, how can you create that space?
- If you live with family or roommates, do you have a space to spend time alone and recharge? Things like taking baths or walks can offer that space.
- If you have children, what are relaxing activities that you can do together? Yoga, meditation, and spending time in nature can benefit everyone.



Social Wellness

Perhaps the most affected area is Social Wellness. Even as restrictions are lifting, many are facing levels of isolation and loneliness that have never been seen before. Working from home, we miss out on the social benefits of working in-person with a team. “Zoom fatigue” wasn’t a common issue 2 years ago, but it’s a real thing, and now many are looking for other ways to stay connected with friends and family.

- Who are 3 people that provide support for your wellness? Have you been able to identify and communicate what you need from them?
- Do you have regularly–scheduled meeting times with friends and family whether online, phone, or safe, socially–distanced outings?
- Have you looked into online classes or meet ups?
- Pick one person a few times a week to check on and see how they’re doing. Tell someone you’re there for them and ask how you can best support them. Write a thank–you note to someone who has helped you in the past.
- Think of someone you care about and write 19 reasons why.
- At the end of the day, think about an exchange you had with someone and journal about why you appreciated it.



Physical Wellness

Have you found yourself unmotivated to do physical activities indoors or outdoors? COVID–19 caused an upheaval in daily routines and low motivation can be a result. Feeling overwhelmed about restrictions or

anxiety about people not wearing masks or social distancing can lead to feelings of apathy.

That same apathy can lead to not being mindful about nutrition and need for sleep.

- Have you set a sleep and wake time to follow, even on weekends?
- What are your bedtime rituals? Are they activities that help you relax? Simple things like guided meditations or avoiding screen time 30 minutes before bed are helpful.
- Depression can make it difficult to get out of bed. Finding things to look forward to can help motivate you to start your day.
- Food affects mood. See if you can find new recipes that add nutrition to your meals. Aside from added nutrition, foods like fruits and vegetables add eye-pleasing colours to your plate!
- Slow-paced breaths can be soothing. Pair it with a mantra—breathe out
- What you want to release, and breathe in what you want to feel. For example: exhale for four seconds and think “worry,” then inhale for four seconds and think, “peace.”
- Set small goals to help you stay on track. Expecting to wake up and do everything perfectly is not reachable.
- Be kind to yourself and allow yourself to be human. We are all trying to do our best during these unprecedented times.



Financial Wellness

- Financial Wellness is another component of the wheel that is being tested by COVID-19. Some have lost their jobs and have had difficulty reaching unemployment offices; others are fortunate to have kept their jobs, but emotional spending has heightened from the state of unrest we're experiencing. Uncertainty around the state of the economy also adds to feelings of anxiety. Although finances are not often easy or pleasant to approach, ignoring them creates even more distress.
- Most people have had a huge shift in daily routine which also affects your budget. Are there things you're saving money on because of that change? Things like gas, commuting, and daily trips to the coffee shop on the way to work, all add up. Make a list of all the expenses you're saving money on.
- Assessing your spending also allows you to see the items you were spending money on that you don't use anymore. Are there subscriptions you can cancel?

- On the flip side, what are items or services you're spending money on now that you didn't have to before? Things like delivery fees and upgrading your internet service also add up.
- If you keep a budget, make sure to note these changes and see how your budget may need to temporarily shift.
- If this is too scary to do alone, do you have a friend or family member who could be with you as you work through your budget? Whether that person is there for moral or practical help, knowing that you're not alone can make the process easier.
- Communication is key. If you're not able to pay rent or are behind on bills, it's better to communicate with your landlord and service providers than wait for them to call you.
- Another way to stay grounded and be less overwhelmed is to take one thing at a time.
- Make a list of tasks that need to be completed and prioritize that list. You can break down that list into sub lists as well. Prioritize your list and cross off the tasks as you go.



Occupational Wellness

While there are obvious factors to Occupational Wellness that COVID-19 is affecting, there are ways to navigate these challenges. Unemployment is up and people are frustrated with long hold times with unemployment offices. If you're fortunate enough to maintain working from home, are you able to separate your work life from your living space? And, being an essential worker has an even greater amount of stress and fear involved. Finding ways to focus on areas you can control will be key in reducing stress.

- If it's possible, is your workspace in an area of your home that allows you to focus?
- Working from home may shift our focus to housework and errands. For some people, a fifteen-minute break from work can be a great time to do dishes or laundry, however it can also be an avoidance tactic and lead to lack of focus, making work even harder. Create time blocks that work for you.
- If you're living with roommates, has everyone communicated with each other what they need to maintain a working environment?
- Planning breaks for meditation, a few minutes outdoors, or even a quick dance break might be helpful ways to recharge. If you have children at home, they might enjoy doing these things with you!
- Connect and network with old colleagues and classmates on LinkedIn, or think about creating an account to get started. If nothing else, you'll have a chance to catch up with them!
- Write a dream job description for yourself. Putting creativity into your downtime can help ease anxiety.

- The demand that has been put on essential workers during this time period has created challenges for individuals and families. What have you learned about your own resilience through this time period?
- What have you learned about your value as a worker that will stay with you in future work?



Intellectual Wellness

Loss of interest or pleasure in activities is a common symptom of depression. Some people found that they tried a lot of new classes and hobbies in the beginning of the pandemic but now are feeling less motivated. It's tempting to mindlessly scroll through social media and binge-watch TV series as they can be effective ways to numb feelings, but it does nothing for your mental health now, or in the long run. It's

especially important to remain curious and find creative ways to stimulate your mind during a pandemic.

- Think back to when you were a child and write about what you wanted to be when you grew up.
- Lookup a new word every day and find a way to use it 5 times throughout the day.
- Explore a new music station either on the radio or using your music streaming app.
- Choose a recipe from a country that you've never been to before.
- If you have a child, choose the recipe with them and ask them to find 3 facts on that country to share while you eat.
- Take advantage of all the free online courses being offered as well as the many music, art institutions, and theatres that are streaming free concerts and exhibits.
- Audiobooks allow you to enjoy stories and learn by using a different sense which stimulates the brain, and it's another way to step away from computer and TV screens.



Spiritual Wellness

These past few months have been a time of reflection for ourselves, our family and friends, and our communities. Trying to find meaning in this unimaginable time is difficult, and that process can be scary and isolating. However, many communities have found ways to stay connected. In fact, because of limitations, we've had to be more creative than ever which made us appreciate all the more how important our spiritual communities and practices are to us in times of need.

- If you belong to a faith community, how have you been able to stay connected?
- Gratitude lists help us stay grounded when we get caught up in what we're missing. While grieving, create a list of 10 things you're grateful for.

- Can you remember the first time you ever felt a sense of belonging in this world? Write down every detail you remember—time of day, who you were with, and what you experienced with your whole body.
- Connecting your mind with your body does wonders for your mental and physical health. Do you have a movement practice that makes you feel connected to yourself? Yoga is one practice, but there are others such as dance, aerobics, and zumba to name a few.
- How has the pandemic shaped your spiritual life? Make a list of negative, neutral, and positive effects. Circle the most impactful one in each column and journal about each item without judgment or having an idea to change anything—just acceptance for what is.
- Is there someone in your life who inspires you spiritually? Write down what you've observed and how it made you feel. Now journal about values that you share with that person and any other relative aspects that you relate to.



Emotional Wellness

The COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting economic recession have negatively affected many people's mental health and created new barriers for people already suffering from mental illness and substance use disorders. During the pandemic, about 4 in 10 adults in the U.S. have reported symptoms of anxiety or depressive disorder, a share that has been largely consistent, up from one in ten adults who reported these symptoms from January to June 2019. A health tracking poll from July 2020 also found that many adults are reporting specific negative impacts on their mental health and well-being, such as difficulty sleeping (36%) or eating (32%), increases in alcohol consumption or substance use (12%), and worsening chronic conditions (12%), due to worry and stress over the coronavirus.

As the pandemic wears on, ongoing and necessary public health measures expose many people to experiencing situations linked to poor mental health outcomes, such as isolation and job loss. This brief

explores mental health and substance use during, and prior to, the COVID-19 pandemic. It focuses on populations that were particularly at risk for experiencing negative mental health or substance abuse consequences during the pandemic, including young adults, people experiencing job loss, parents and children, communities of colour, and essential workers.

Many essential workers continue to face a number of challenges, including greater risk of contracting the coronavirus than other workers. Compared to nonessential workers, essential workers are more likely to report symptoms of anxiety or depressive disorder (42% vs. 30%), starting or increasing substance use (25% vs. 11%), and suicidal thoughts (22% vs. 8%) during the pandemic.

Both those newly experiencing mental health or substance abuse disorders and those already diagnosed before the pandemic may require mental health and substance use services but could face additional barriers because of the pandemic.



Chapter 9

A wellness program is a comprehensive health initiative designed to maintain or improve well-being through proper diet, exercise, stress management, and illness prevention. Wellness programs can include smoking cessation, weight loss education, fitness challenges, therapy, and many other plans designed to increase the overall health of an individual.

Designing and managing a wellness program is an important step in improving the health and productivity of individual.

Wellness programs are very beneficial and impactful for the overall well-being.

Emerging Trends in Wellness Programs

1. Fitness Challenges and Contests

Fitness challenges and incentives are not new to employee health and wellness programs in some companies – visit challenges page to view those centered on physical activity, healthy eating, emotional health, and more.

2. Flu Shot and Vaccination

In 2022, we're still very much in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic which has prompted many wellness services to offer incentives for those who receive their vaccination and flu shots.

3. Nutrition & Weight Management

A comprehensive wellness program will include nutrition and weight management. Although weight loss is deemed as one of the hardest

habits to maintain, we've seen employees' consistent and positive results even after a two year period.

4. Resilience And Stress Management

Learning resilience and stress management skills is a great way to stave off future ailments. A lot of our physical pains are stress induced, or at the very least, they are exacerbated by stress – hence the reason why wellness programs tackle this issue.

5. Telehealth

Online health and wellness programs have become more popular than ever since the 2020 pandemic started. Wellness programs have taken notice and many have just recently added this service to their program.

Discover the Best Wellness Programs

A health and wellness program is a set of initiatives set forth by a company or organization to help their employees' live healthier and happier lives.

By focusing on employee health and wellness, a company is able to decrease medical costs and boost productivity simultaneously.

Corporate Nutrition Companies

- *Snack Nation*



Snack Nation is a wellness program that helps people become better versions of themselves by supporting increased health, productivity, and happiness, both in the workplace and at home. This employee health and wellness program curates and delivers great tasting snacks to thousands

of awesome offices – places like Microsoft, Open Table, LinkedIn, and The Huffington Post. Snack Nation members receive unprecedented access to the best tasting healthier snacks from the world’s foremost emerging natural food brands, and discover new healthier snack favourites before any of their friends. This unmatched snacking experience is also available for the home via Snack Nation Market. Snack Nation has donated more than two million meals to families in need through a partnership with Feeding America since launching in 2015.

- *Grow*



Grow provides special wellness services which is comprised of a team of health and nutrition experts who strive to help change the way employees eat. Companies participate in their wellness programs to help them integrate healthier food options into their organization for their employees to take advantage of. This includes the revolutionary G3 Healthy Vending Machine which is a special vending machine that contains only healthy food snacks, rather than the typical junk food snacks you’d find in other vending machines. That way, employee nutrition can be sustained within the organization at all levels. Micro markets can also be introduced to enhance this experience as well.

Health and Wellness Campaign Providers

- *Health Enhancement Systems*



Health Management Systems is a health and wellness organization which creates some of the best incentive programs for employees at their workplace. Since 1992, HES has developed wellness programs in the workplace for hospitals, non-profit organizations, government agencies, corporations, educational institutions, and other businesses. Not only have their health and wellness programs improved the lives of American workers, but they've also spread their employee wellness programs examples to countries in Africa, Asia, and Europe as well. HES helps enhance all areas of employee health including stress, weight, nutrition, and fitness.

Online Health and Wellness Programs

- *MediKeeper*



MediKeeper supplies technology that allows wellness companies, health plans, benefit providers, and employers to design their own customized wellness portals for managing the health of their employees and clients. Any corporate administrator would love the technology services which MediKeeper provides because they can now make sure the wellness programs that they're investing in are truly paying off for them. The three main wellness services that MediKeeper offers are the Enterprise Health Portal, the Customizable Wellness Portal and the Health Risk Assessment. With these programs at hand, clients can keep all the content and data of their employee wellness programs together in one area.

Wellness Incentive Companies

- *LifeDojo*



LifeDojo is all about creating the best incentive programs for employees so they can eventually feel motivated to lead a healthier lifestyle on their own. First, this will require them to participate in a comprehensive wellness program in the workplace that is both engaging and scientific. Over time, it will change the habits of the employees from a self-destructive one to a healthy living one. Some of the health and wellness programs promoted by LifeDojo in the workplace include exercise, healthy eating, stress reduction techniques, and resilience increasing techniques. Employees will also be taught the importance of sleeping, stopping tobacco use, and taking control of their finances.

Health and Wellness Management Companies

- *Sprout*



Christina Ford and Martha Switzer created Sprout after working for big multinational corporations for years and seeing their lack of wellness programs in the workplace. They found that employees too often didn't have a balance between work and life, so they decided to create this well-being company to assist other companies in achieving this balance. As a result, they've produced some of the best incentive programs for employees in the industry. Now more employees have the knowledge and resources necessary to live healthy and productive lifestyles. In addition, Sprout gives employers the tools to measure the impact that these health and wellness programs are having on their employees.

- *WellNow*



WellNow helps employers implement programs in the workplace that are based on data-driven insight and strategies towards employee health and wellness. WellNow will first offer a health assessment on the employees and then create custom health and wellness programs that are suitable for their particular health issues. WellNow can also provide disease management services in case the organization in question has a disease problem. Otherwise, WellNow's wellness programs in the workplace will revolve around enhancing the physical and mental health of the employees so they can change their behaviour and make healthier lifestyle choices on their own.

Stress or Emotional Health Companies

- *StressStop*

StressStop

Stress management is becoming a more crucial aspect in employee health and wellness. If employees are too stressed, it can be detrimental to the productivity of a company. StressStop was created to deliver an array of wellness services to companies that are currently having this problem with their employees. Furthermore, StressStop will ensure these stress management resources pertain to the culture and atmosphere of the company that needs them. Instead of just delivering new age materials that don't pertain to every company, StressStop has materials which contain the latest psychological and medical information that can help different kinds of individuals reduce their stress levels in the workplace.

Weight Management Companies

- *Livongo*



Livongo transforms lives, workplaces and communities by offering a lifestyle wellness program with weight-management and disease-prevention solutions that help all populations live a happier, healthier life. What sets Livongo apart from others is the level of personalization they bring to their suite of solutions that tackle obesity, diabetes and metabolic syndrome. These personal wellness plans deliver real-time interventions that evolve as individual needs change, producing proven outcomes and lasting results. In fact, 88 percent of Livongo clients lose weight and 78 percent keep it off 12 months later.

The right health and wellness organization will have results as proof of their strategy. That's the first point of concern – ensuring that the wellness program has seen optimal results and is based on science and behaviour modelling. Next, consider if you're looking for something small like a daily fruit basket, or something a little bigger like physical challenges and weight loss initiatives for your employees.

Hire wellness programs coordinators that provide employees with an initial impression that motivates them! It's important to understand that a successful wellness program – one that helps you cut health care costs and increase productivity – will offer your team a comprehensive program. Look for tech integrations, physical challenges and campaigns with incentives, and evidence of positive results from previous campaigns.

Ways to conquer stress levels

From minor challenges to major crises, stress is a part of life. And while you can't always control your circumstances, you can control how you respond to them.

When stress becomes overwhelming, or it's chronic, it can take a toll on your well-being. That's why it's important to have effective stress relievers that can calm your mind and your body.

And what works for you at home might not be an option when you're at work or in the community (dancing around your living room might be helpful but dancing in the grocery store might not be).

So it's important to have a variety of stress relief tools at your disposal. Then, you'll be able to pick a strategy that works best for your current circumstances.

Short-Term Stress-Relief Strategies You Can Do Anywhere

Whether you're about to be interviewed for a job or you're feeling overwhelmed by your child's behaviour at the playground, it's important to have some stress reduction tools that can lower your stress right now.

The best short-term strategies:

- Can be performed anywhere
- Take very little practice to master
- Are free
- Provide immediate relief

1. Try Guided Imagery

Guided imagery is like taking a short vacation in your mind. It can involve imagining yourself being in your "happy place"—maybe picturing yourself sitting on a beach, listening to the waves, smelling the ocean, and feeling the warm sand underneath you.



Guided imagery can be done with a recording where you listen to someone walk you through a peaceful scene. Or, once you know how to do it yourself, you can practice guided imagery on

your own.

Simply close your eyes for a minute and walk yourself through a peaceful scene. Think about all the sensory experiences you'd engage in and allow yourself to feel as though you're really there. After a few minutes, open your eyes and return to the present moment.

2. Meditate

Meditation brings short-term stress relief as well as lasting stress management benefits. There are many different forms of meditation to try—each one is unique and brings its own appeal.

You might develop a mantra that you repeat in your mind as you take slow deep



breaths. Or, you might take a few minutes to practice mindfulness, which

involves being in the moment. Simply pay attention to what you see, hear, taste, touch, and smell.

3. Practice Progressive Muscle Relaxation

Progressive muscle relaxation involves relaxing all the muscles in your



body, group by group. To practice, you can start with a few deep breaths.

Then, practice tightening and relaxing each muscle group, starting with your forehead and moving down to your toes.

With practice, you'll learn to recognize tension and tightness in your muscles and you'll be able to relax more easily. Each time you practice, however, you should experience a feeling of relaxation sweeping through your body.

4. Focus on Breathing

Just focusing on your breath or changing the way you breathe can make a big difference to your overall stress level.

Breathing techniques can calm your body and your brain in just a few minutes.

The best news is, no one around you will even know you're doing them. So whether you're in a stressful



meeting or you're sitting in a crowded theatre, breathing exercises could be key to reducing your stress.

While there are many different breathing exercises, like karate breathing, a few simple ones include:

1. Breathe in through your nose and watch your belly fill with air. Count slowly to three as you inhale. Hold for one second and then slowly breathe out through your nose as you count to three again.
2. Breathe in through your nose and imagine that you're inhaling peaceful, calm air. Imagine that air spreading throughout your body. As you exhale, imagine that you're breathing out stress and tension.

5. Take a Walk

Exercise is a fantastic stress reliever that can work in minutes. Taking a



walk allows you to enjoy a change of scenery, which can get you into a different frame of mind, and brings the benefits of exercise as well.

So whether you just need to take a stroll

around the office to get a

break from a frustrating task or you decide to go for a long walk in the park after work, walking is a simple but effective way to rejuvenate your mind and body.

Fast-Acting Stress-Relief Strategies That Work Well at Home

In the privacy of your own home, there are many stress relief strategies that can help you relax fast. So whether you've had a tough day at work or you're stressed about how much you have to do, these strategies can give you some immediate relief from your stress.

1. Get a Hug From a Loved One



Physical touch can do a lot to relieve your stress.

Hugging a loved one can be especially beneficial.

Oxytocin hormone is released when we hug someone causes a reduction in blood

pressure. It also reduces the

stress hormone norepinephrine and can produce a sense of relaxation.

So don't be afraid to ask a loved one for a hug if you need it. It's good for both of you and it can be one of the simplest forms of stress relief available.

2. Enjoy Aromatherapy

Aromatherapy has real benefits for stress relief—it can help you to feel energized, more relaxed, or more present in the moment.

Emerging research suggests certain scents can alter brain



wave activity and decrease stress hormones in the body.

So whether you enjoy candles, diffusers, or body products, consider incorporating some aromatherapy into your day.

3. Create Artwork

Getting in touch with your creative side may have been easy for you during childhood, but if you've lost touch with your penchant for artwork, it's not too late to pick it up again.



If you aren't into drawing or painting, consider colouring in a coloring book. Adult coloring books have risen in popularity and for good reason—coloring can be a great stress reliever.

Research consistently shows that coloring can have a meditative effect. Study found that anxiety levels decline in people who were coloring complex geometric patterns, making it a perfect outlet for stress reduction.

Long-Term Stress-Relief Strategies for Lasting Health

Certain habits can promote resilience to stress, as well as increase overall wellness. For example, those who exercise or meditate regularly tend to become less stressed in the face of a difficult challenge.

So it's important to create a lifestyle that will help you ward off stress and deal with challenges in a healthy way.

1. Eat a Balanced Diet

A poor diet can bring greater reactivity toward stress. Emotional eating and reaching for high-fat, high-sugar foods can provide a temporary sense of relief that adds to your long-term stress.



Refined carbs, like cookies and potato chips, can cause a spike in blood sugar. When your blood sugar crashes, you might experience more stress and anxiety.

Consuming a healthy diet can help you combat stress over the long haul. Foods like eggs, avocado, and walnuts support mood regulation and energy balance.

2. Make Time for Leisure Activities

Leisure activities can be a wonderful way to relieve stress. Yet, many people feel as though their lives are too busy for hobbies, games, or extra fun.



But building time for leisure into your schedule could be key to helping you feel your best. And when you feel better, you'll perform better, which means leisure time may make your work

time more efficient.

Whether you find joy in caring for a garden or you like making quilts, hobbies and leisure are key to living your best life.

3. Develop a Positive Self-Talk Habit

The way you talk to yourself matters. Harsh self-criticism, self-doubt, and catastrophic predictions aren't helpful. If you're constantly thinking things like, "I don't have time for this," and "I can't stand this," you'll stress yourself out.

Positive self-talk can help you develop a healthier outlook. And an optimistic and compassionate conversation can help you manage your emotions and take positive action.



4. Practice Yoga

Yoga combines physical movement, meditation, light exercise, and controlled breathing—all of which provide excellent stress relief.



And while you're likely to reap immediate benefits from a single yoga session, you're likely to receive long-term benefits if you incorporate it into your life in a consistent way.

Yoga offers a variety of physical, psychological, and spiritual benefits. To get started, you might take a class, enroll in an online program, or use an app to help you begin practicing.

5. Express Gratitude

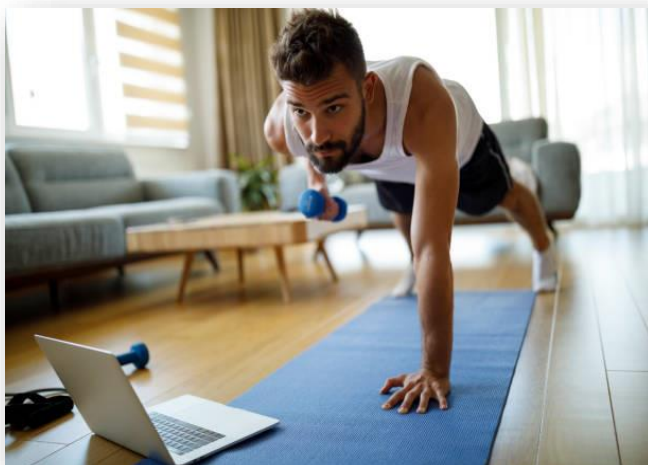
Gratitude helps you recognize all the things you have to be thankful for. Whether you're grateful for a sunny day or thankful you arrived at work safely, think about all the good things you have in life.

Gratitude also reminds you of all of the resources you have to cope with stress, which can be quite empowering.

So whether you decide to make it a habit to identify what you're grateful for as you sit around the dinner table or you decide to write down three things you're grateful for in a gratitude journal every day, make gratitude a regular habit.



6. Prioritize Exercise



Physical activity is key to managing stress and improving mental health, and the best news is, there are many different kinds of activities that can reduce your stress.

Join a gym, take a class, or exercise outside. Keep in mind that there are many different ways to get more physical activity in your day too.

Walking, strength training, kayaking, hiking, and spin class are just a few different examples of ways you can get stress relief.

7. Obtain Social Support

Having supportive people in your life is the key to stress management. If you lack emotional support and friendship, it's important to get it.

That may mean reaching out to your existing network.

Perhaps confiding in a family member or distant friend can help you become closer and it may give you the social support you need.



You may also need to expand your network. Join an organization, attend a support group, or get professional help if you lack supportive people in your life.

8. Cut out Things That Add to Your Stress

Sometimes, the best way to reduce your stress is to cut something out of your life. Get rid of the things that are adding to your stress so you can experience more peace.



Watching the news, being constantly connected to your digital devices, drinking alcohol, and consuming too much caffeine are just a few of the things that may add more stress to your

life. Making some changes to your daily habits could be instrumental in helping you feel better.

Discover Unhealthy Life Patterns

Diet, physical activity, sedentary behaviour and sleep are typically examined independently with adiposity; however, their combined influence remains uncertain. This review aims to systematically summarize evidence on the clustering of these behaviours through lifestyle patterns and evaluate associations with adiposity in children aged 5–12 years. Search strategies were run in six databases. Twenty-eight papers met the inclusion criteria, six of which included all four behaviours.

A range of lifestyle patterns were identified (healthy, unhealthy and mixed). Mixed patterns were most frequently reported.

Unhealthy patterns comprising low physical activity and high sedentary behaviour were also frequently observed.

Mixed patterns comprising healthy diets, low physical activity and high sedentary behaviour were more commonly seen in girls, whereas

boys were more physically active, similarly sedentary and had unhealthier diets.

Children from lower socio-economic backgrounds tended to more frequently display unhealthy patterns. Unhealthy lifestyle patterns were more often associated with adiposity risk than healthy and mixed patterns. With few studies including all four behaviours, it is difficult to establish a clear picture of their interplay and associations with adiposity. Nonetheless, reliance on lifestyle patterns is likely more beneficial than individual behaviours in targeting adiposity and improving understanding of how these behaviours influence health.

Common Unhealthy Life Patterns

Tackling unhealthy life patterns is all about awareness. As such, we're going to discuss some of the most common patterns, which should give you an opportunity to examine if these apply to you. Let's take a look.

1. You Don't Have the Energy to Engage Fully in Your Day-to-Day Life

In many cases, self-destructive behaviour can sap our energy and motivation.

If you find yourself tired all the time, you need to take a close look at what your routine looks like. In most cases, you should be able to find the source of this behaviour right away. The problem is, addressing the underlying cause of this behaviour can be a problem.

If it's something physical, such as lack of sleep or a terrible diet, you can address those problems directly, such as by improving your sleep schedule or improving your food habits. However, if you're suffering

from depression – which is another possibility – the road to recovery can take more work.

2. You Constantly Make Excuses for Your Personal and Professional Shortcomings

If you find yourself repeatedly making excuses for your shortcomings, you've fallen into one of the most common unhealthy life patterns. This is not only likely to negatively affect your work, but also your relationship with clients and co-workers. To break the cycle, remember to address problems early and hold yourself accountable for any mistakes or delays that occur.

3. You Neglect Your Physical Health

One of most insidious types of unhealthy behaviour you can engage in is neglecting your physical health. This behaviour can take many forms, such as: eating too much or too little, not getting enough sleep, a lack of physical exercise, overindulging in substances that impact your body or mind.

A little bit of indulgence is OK from time to time. However, if you're abusing your body too frequently with one or more of the behaviours mentioned above, then that's a problem you need to address as soon as possible. Consider asking a doctor for help in how to improve your diet or sleep habits. Even exercise doesn't have to be as difficult as you might fear, even for a total beginner.

4. You Refuse to Accept Help from Others

Refusing to accept help from others is a pattern of self-destructive behaviour that can have a significant impact on every aspect of your life and career. The thing is, it doesn't matter how talented or productive you are. At some point, you will need external help. If you refuse to ask or accept it, you'll just end up digging yourself into a ditch.

For example, imagine you run into a problem at work you don't know how to solve. Even after performing some research, you still can't crack it, and you have a deadline coming up. In this case, the logical thing to do is asking someone who is more experienced for support and assistance.

It's important you know how to research and tackle things on your own, but asking for help is not a sign of weakness. In fact, asking co-workers for help can be a great way to improve your work relationships. After all, asking people for help is proven to make them like us more and can help build personal relationships and improve the quality of your work in the process.

Self-destructive behaviour refers to any action you make even though you know it will have a negative impact on yourself. One common example of this is smoking. A cigarette can feel like a cool glass of water when you're parched, but we all know they come with plenty of nasty side effects.

- Negating your mental and physical health.
- Impacting your self-esteem.
- Damaging your personal and work relationships.
- Affecting your work performance.

It is difficult to recognize self-destructive behaviour patterns. Though it is very easy to tell someone with a problem they should just "fix it".

However, dealing with self-destructive behaviour is usually much harder than that.

You may have seen this yourself with addicts, many of whom believe they can kick their habits anytime they want. Instead, they're prone to fall

back into those patterns if they don't admit the severity of their problems and take a systematic approach to fix it.

Its cliché, but the first step of dealing with a problem is recognizing and accepting it. With negative life patterns, it can be tempting to think you're not doing anything out of the ordinary. However, the longer you let these patterns continue, the harder it can be to break them, so you want to examine yourself before you fall in too deep.

Chapter 10

It's important to make better decisions for many reasons including having a greater sense of self, learning from experiences, standing out from others, increasing your confidence and showcasing yourself as the best of all.

It's normal to feel like you could be doing more when it comes to self-improvement. But being a better person doesn't involve being overly hard on yourself. In fact, it's quite the opposite.

The more self-kindness and self-compassion you can foster, the more equipped you'll be to treat those around you the same way. Plus, doing good for others can give your life a deeper sense of meaning. It may even help to improve your physical and mental health.

How to Ensure a High Quality Life?

Here's a look at some ways to build self-improvement into your daily routine to let go negative thoughts about yourself and also on how to ensure a high-quality life:-

1. Try not to overthink

Every decision should come with some thinking as you weigh the



pros, cons, consequences and all the available options, but overthinking can keep you from being able to make a final decision. It's important to be able to come to a conclusion without too

much time spent evaluating everything. Overthinking can cause you to make a decision you might not normally have made and cause you undue stress at the same time.

The more you overthink, the more likely you are to bring doubt into your decision-making process, which can become a pattern and affect future decisions you have to make. If you're struggling with your decision, take a step away from it and return when your mind feels more clear.

2. Take care of yourself

Your sleep and water intake can affect your mental clarity and focus and impact your decision-making capabilities. Aim for seven

to nine hours of quality sleep per night. To achieve this, try to stop using electronics right before bed and consider a white noise machine to help lull you to sleep and keep you there. During the day,



drink eight glasses of water. You may find it easier to drink if you

keep a water bottle next to you at all times. If you struggle with drinking water, try to put fruit in your water to make it more enjoyable.

3. Remove yourself from the situation

If you want to be a better decision-maker, it can be helpful to allow yourself to be an outside observer of the situation. When you do, you're more likely to think about all your other options and even be more open to considering compromises, which can be especially helpful when your decision impacts others. Sometimes there are a lot of emotions involved in the decision process, and removing yourself from the situation for even a short period of time can help you refocus and look at the facts of what's in front of you.

4. Don't shy away from your mistakes

One of the best ways to make better decisions is by facing your mistakes and learning from them. Making mistakes isn't necessarily a negative thing, as they can give you more confidence in your abilities to make decisions in the future based on your experiences.

5. Examine the opposite of your decision

Before moving forward with what you feel is your final decision, make sure you've considered the complete opposite. It's important to be sure of your decisions, so by examining other options, you can gain confidence that you're making the right decision or come up with different choices that you may not have thought about.

When you challenge yourself, you're also challenging any long-held beliefs you've had that may have clouded your past decisions.

Examining choices helps you to make well-rounded decisions and grow as a decision-maker.

6. Ask for feedback

There is a delicate balance you should be cautious of when asking for feedback during



your decision process. Some feedback can be highly valuable, especially if it comes from people who have been in your same situation and can

tell you about their outcome or who you admire for their experience and knowledge about a particular topic. It's also effective to ask for feedback from those who you will directly affect by your decision, as they will be better able to give you the perspective you may not have yet.

However, too much feedback can make your decision even harder by giving you too many differing opinions that you may have a hard time juggling.

7. Give yourself advice

To make better decisions, pretend like you're giving advice to a friend on how to proceed. By doing this, you're removing yourself from a situation enough to be more objective in your decision. It can be a lot easier to advise a friend than to decide without it, plus you may find that you're kinder to yourself and are more positive about your role in making important choices.

8. Manage your emotions

Emotions should play a role in your decision making, but it becomes necessary to make sure you're acting with emotional intelligence if you want to make better decisions. Just like there is a delicate balance to asking for feedback, it's the same for managing your emotions. Too much emotion can cloud your judgment, causing you to make decisions that you may not have if you were thinking more rationally.



This applies to both positive and negative emotions, too. For example, if you are overly excited about something, you don't want to make rash decisions based on your excitement rather than based on how this item will look when put into practice.

9. Weigh short- and long-term consequences

Nearly every decision has short- and long-term consequences, and it's important to think about both when you're coming to a conclusion. What may look like a great short-term decision may not be wonderful when looking at the long-term perspective, and vice versa.

Also, be sure to explore decisions that can cause some disorganization or discomfort in the short-term, but have very beneficial long-term benefits that make everything well worth it. For example, if a manager decides to restructure the office, you may feel displaced as it forces the team to work elsewhere while the office is under construction, but once it's complete, you can be

happy with a cohesive office space that promotes teamwork and open communication.

10. Accept the possibility of making a poor decision

Being a better decision maker involves being willing to take risks and know that not every decision you make is going to be the best one. This possibility is something to come to terms with so that you feel confident in deciding in the first place. A benefit to knowing that there is the possibility that your decision isn't the right one is that you are more open to having a contingency plan in case things don't go right.

11. Stay true to your values

When you stay true to your values during the decision-making



process, it should be easier to see the path in front of you, basing your decisions on your goals and where you see a situation going in the long-

term. Plus, staying true

to your values gives you confidence and helps you accept your decision even when things don't work out as you were hoping.

12. Use data

For informed decisions that you can present to your manager, use data when available. Data and analytics reports can help you make decisions based on history, trends and projections. Data helps you understand how processes have worked in the past and produce actionable insights that you can use to your advantage.

Activities to Assess Yourself

Self-care is a process and it may look different for everyone. Before you start or jump into a new self-care journey, it can be helpful to know where you're at right now. Evaluating what you're currently doing can help you identify the areas that may need a bit more attention. You can analyse yourself and take self-care assessment to get a better view of your current routine and make adjustments.

Remember that it's important to set goals that are realistic and choose activities that you will enjoy long-term. When it comes to taking care of yourself, consistency is key. Focus on activities that you can participate in regularly. Even if you can't commit a significant amount of time, a few minutes of self-care a day is better than none at all.

Emotional

Emotional self-care can help us effectively cope with life and create satisfying relationships.

- ✓ *Talk to someone*

We all struggle sometimes, and it's okay to ask for help. Whatever you're feeling, it can be useful to talk through it with a loved one, like a friend or family member.

- ✓ *Evaluate your social media habits*

As we continue to navigate difficult times, we may find ourselves on our phones and social media accounts more often. If your social media or news consumption is negatively affecting your mental health, it may be time to re-evaluate your habits.

- ✓ *Volunteer for a cause that's important to you*

Are you passionate about helping others? Consider getting involved through volunteering! There are several Resource Center that holds variety of opportunities to help you get involved in the community.

Spiritual

Spiritual wellness can help us cultivate a sense of purpose and meaning in life.

✓ *Journal*

Journaling allows you to observe and explore your feelings, practice gratitude, clear your mind and get things off your chest. If you need help getting started, consider using a journaling prompt

✓ *Join a workshop*

Counselling and Psychiatric Services (CAPS) offers free virtual workshops to help students build valuable skills related to stress management, mindfulness, distress tolerance, self-care, relationships and healthy living throughout the week.

✓ *Meditate*

Meditation can be a great way to create a deeper connection with our inner self and relieve unwanted stress. If you are new to meditation, try an app or join some classes.

Physical

Physical self-care can help us address our basic needs for physical activity, healthy foods and adequate sleep.

✓ *Stay active*

Try a variety of activities to find something you enjoy and can see yourself doing long-term. Need help getting started? Consult to the

nearby gym classes or the dance class you wish to join from so long.

✓ *Eat nutritious meals and snacks*

Improve your mental and physical health by eating foods that fuel you. There are several nutrition services that offers free online nutrition assessments to help you evaluate your current eating habits. Need additional support? They also have telehealth appointments available or you can consult to a nutrition expert or dietician.

✓ *Create a night time routine*

Set yourself up for success during the day by creating a relaxing night time routine that will help you get 7-9 hours of sleep each night. Try to stick to a consistent sleep schedule and avoid disruptions by turning off your phone notifications.

✓ *Reflect on your relationship with substances*

Substance use is part of our human experience, and our relationships with substances, whether we choose to use or not, are complex. Substance use exists on a continuum and can be both helpful and harmful.

Social

Social self-care can help us to create a sense of connection, belonging and a meaningful support system.

✓ *Stay connected*

Gather your friends to enjoy hobbies together! Consider starting a book club, discussing your favorite TV shows, hosting gaming tournaments, sharing recipes or creating challenges. Whatever you

and your friends are into, explore ways to enjoy those activities together, both in-person and virtually.

✓ *Schedule a weekly chat*

Schedule a weekly chat with friends or family to catch up or check in. You can also try different activities to keep your calls fun and engaging. Consider doing a paint and sip at home or cook a meal together.

✓ *It's okay to say no*

While it's important to stay connected and keep in touch, it can also feel overwhelming at times. Remember that you don't have to say yes to every request for your time. Saying no to things can help us safeguard our time, conserve our energy and focus on things that we really want to do.

Financial

Financial self-care can help us feel satisfied and content with our current and future financial situations.

✓ *Create a budget*

It can be hard to know where you stand financially if you're not in tune with how you make and spend money. Take some time to review your finances, including your income, expenses and debts. Once you know how much money you have (income) and how much money you spend (expenses), you can work to create a budget that sets you up for success now and into the future. You can also use free online tools to help you set goals, track expenses and more.

✓ *Set financial goals and milestones*

Once you have a budget in place, think of some specific goals you'd like to set. For instance, maybe you'd like to save up for a trip with your friends once things return to normal or create an emergency fund. Consider how much money you would need and create a savings plan. Commit to saving some money towards your goal each month. Every little bit helps.

✓ *Learn about personal finance*

Finances can be tricky and there are a lot of terms that we may not be familiar with. However, there are a number of free resources online to help you make the most of your personal finances. Check out sites to watch free videos and quiz yourself. They cover topics like banking, credit cards, debt, loans, taxes, investments, insurance and more.

Occupational

Occupational self-care can help us feel satisfied in our career paths and our jobs.

✓ *Explore your options*

Sometimes it may feel like you are on a set career path or maybe you're unsure about what you want to do in the future. Take this time to explore your options and see what feels right for you. There are several website that can help you explore different career paths. You can also use their free assessment tools to find careers that match your interests, skills and values.

✓ *Review your resume*

Your resume is often the first impression you make when applying for internships, jobs and other positions. If it's been a while since you reviewed or updated your resume, there are apps that provide

tips for building the perfect resume. You can also make an appointment with a career counsellor to go over your resume together and get expert advice.

✓ *Check out career webinars*

COVID-19 has impacted many of our jobs and internships. There are library of online resources including pre-recorded webinars and workshops to help address internships and jobs during these uncertain times. You can also join events and webinars hosted by employers through Handshake.

Intellectual

Intellectual self-care can help us recognize our creative abilities and find ways to expand upon our knowledge and skills.

✓ *Learn online*

Did you know students have free access to LinkedIn Learning? Sign in with your identikey to explore courses in job negotiation, design, writing, public speaking and more.

✓ *Discover your strengths*

The assessments can help you identify your unique strengths and find ways to utilize them in your academics, personal and professional development.

Environmental

Environmental self-care can help us create pleasant and stimulating environments that support our well-being.

✓ *Spend time outside*

Getting outside is a great way to change your scenery, get some fresh air and feel more at ease. Commit to spending time outside each day for at least 30 minutes. Remember to practice social distancing, avoid crowded areas, wear a face covering, stay hydrated and use sunscreen (SPF 30+).

✓ *Rearrange your space*

Our spaces can impact us in a lot of ways. Refresh your space by rearranging the furniture, adding art or organizing things in a different way. Try out simple DIY projects at home.

✓ *Create a vision board*

Vision boards are visual representations of the intentions and goals you want for your life. They can help inspire us, keep us grounded and remind us of what's important. Create your own vision board by using photos, magazine clippings or other elements you have around the house. Once you've created your ideal vision board, hang it up in a place you'll see it often!

Conclusion

Mindful eating, gratitude rituals, and consistent workouts – those are merely elements that can lead to so many different and even unexpected outcomes – depending on how you put your mind to it. Health and wellness lifestyle isn't just a combination of various practices you can acquire – it's a whole new way of perspective, a change in your approach to yourself, your habits, and your self-consciousness.

New rituals and elements need to fuse into your life and re-master the structure of your daily routine. It is a fresh way of treating yourself, nurturing your body and mind from the inside out.

Don't try to be perfect from the very beginning and all the way down acknowledge your progress and remember: there is no perfection and everyone's path is different. With a careful, non-judgmental approach you will find your own pace of welcoming and using your new rituals.

Let them become more than just parts of a puzzle – let it become a part of your life.



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