

Welcome back from your break. This session is on wellness and will offer you a chance to explore the many aspects of your home and work lives that contribute to your health.

(Note to the presenter: Comments in parentheses are instructions you should follow while giving the presentation. Do not read these comments to participants. This convention will be followed throughout the notes in this slide show.)

Agenda

- **Description of wellness**
- **Ways we can achieve mental, physical, and social wellness**
- **Stress reduction and the relaxation response**
- **Making a commitment to healthy lifestyle change**

Let's start by going over the agenda.

(Briefly go over the agenda items. Participant handouts should include a copy of this presentation, obtained by printing the PDF version of these slides in the Training 2 folder on this Web Resource.)

What Is Wellness?

Wellness is a choice of lifestyle marked by a balance of mind, body, and spirit.

What is wellness?

Wellness is a choice of lifestyle marked by a balance of mind, body, and spirit.

Just as a balanced diet is important to health, so is a balance of the body, or physical wellness; the mind, or the emotional and intellectual wellness; and the spirit, or social and spiritual wellness.

Let's talk about each of these aspects of wellness.

Body: Physical Wellness

- **Physical wellness involves aspects of health related directly to the body.**
- **Physical wellness means you can get through the day with enough energy for work and play.**

Physical wellness refers to those aspects of health related directly to the body.

Physical wellness means you can get through the day with enough energy for work and play. It is the aspect of wellness that often first comes to mind when people think of wellness. But as you will see, all aspects of wellness are important to our health. In fact, the World Health Organization defines health as “a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being.”*

SOURCE

*World Health Organization. (1948). WHO Definition of Health. Retrieved on January 15, 2015, from <http://www.who.int/about/definition/en/print.html>.

Mind: Emotional and Intellectual Wellness

- **Emotional wellness involves a sense of self-worth and an acceptance of things that are different.**
- **Intellectual wellness involves your ability to use the knowledge that you acquire.**

Emotional wellness involves a sense of self-worth and an acceptance for things that are different. Emotional wellness means you are open to learning new things and accepting new ideas. This openness helps you cope with stressful situations and accept them as part of life. You are able to appropriately control and express your emotions.

Intellectual wellness involves your ability to learn and to use the knowledge you acquire. Intellectual wellness means you are open to experiences that will broaden your knowledge base.

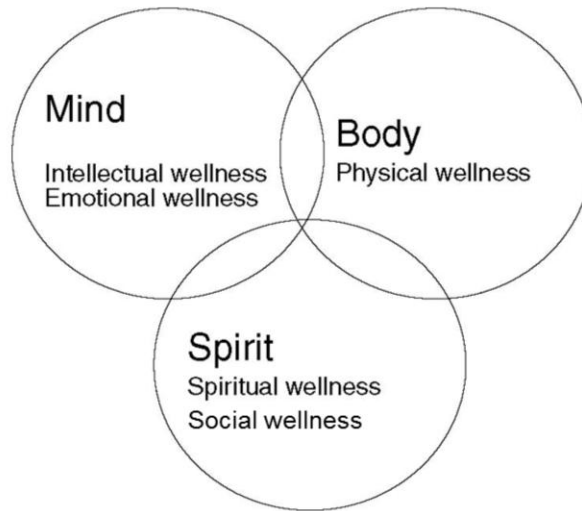
Spirit: Social and Spiritual Wellness

- **Social wellness involves interacting with people and the environment and having satisfying relationships.**
- **Spiritual wellness involves your relationship to other living things and the role of spiritual direction in your life, working to find potential and find harmony in living.**

Social wellness involves interacting with people and the environment and having satisfying relationships. Social wellness means you have friends with whom you discuss your problems and with whom you spend time.

Spiritual wellness means you are working to achieve spiritual potential and to find harmony in living.

Group Activity: Mind, Body, Spirit



What does it take to achieve each type of wellness? Let's split into groups for a brainstorming session.

(Split participants into three groups and give each group a sheet of newsprint paper with one of the following headings: Mind, Body, or Spirit. Ask the groups to brainstorm characteristics of their type of wellness and activities that can enhance their component; perhaps offer an incentive or a prize, such as pens, T-shirts, or other gifts, for each idea.)

As we begin our brainstorming activity, notice that in this diagram, the three aspects of wellness overlap. We will find that many characteristics of wellness fall into more than one category.

Mind: Activities to Enhance Psychological Wellness

- **Support groups for grieving**
- **Time management techniques**
- **Facilitated communication classes**
- **Massage therapy**
- **Reading groups**
- **Deep breathing techniques**
- **Mindfulness**

(continued)

(Reconvene the large group and have each small group report on its brainstorming session. Write the small groups' responses on a flip chart. You may want to use a symbol of three overlapping circles to represent the three areas of wellness, since there are usually some characteristics that come up in more than one area—e.g., meditation is both spiritual and emotional, exercise is both physical and emotional, mindfulness can apply to all three areas of wellness.)

Let's hear the report from the Mind group.

(Use the points on this slide to review and enhance the report of the group.)

Mind focuses on mental wellness, which involves stress management, team building, support groups formed around a central theme, communication classes, and nurturing the intellect. Here are some examples of activities addressing this area. *(Read slide.)*

Mind: Activities to Enhance Psychological Wellness (*continued*)

- **Mindfulness** is the practice of being fully present in each moment. Being:

Receptive

Open

Accepting of things as they are

You may have practiced or heard about the concept of mindfulness. To put it simply, mindfulness is the practice of being fully present in each moment, rather than letting our mind and body go on autopilot. Think of it like mono-tasking, or doing only one thing at a time. For example, instead of thinking about your to-do list while brushing your teeth, concentrate on only brushing your teeth. When listening to a good friend tell you about their day, just listen!

Mindfulness can be applied to any area of our daily life, contributing to our total wellness by living more fully from moment to moment!

Body: Activities to Enhance Physical Wellness

- **Smoking cessation**
- **Aerobics**
- **Walking clubs**
- **Strength training**
- **Food literacy**
- **Choosing healthy foods and cooking with healthy oils**
- **Mindful eating**

(continued)

Let's hear the report from the Body group.

(Use the points on this slide to review and enhance the report of the group.)

Body primarily relates to physical wellness, which involves nutrition, exercise, personal hygiene (being clean and groomed for work), and medical self-care (preventive health care and treatment for illnesses). Here are examples of activities addressing this area. *(Read slide.)*

Body: Activities to Enhance Physical Wellness (*continued*)

- **Mindful eating:**
 - What to eat?
 - How much to eat?
 - How to eat?
 - Why we eat what we eat?

Hanh & Cheung. (2010). *Savor: Mindful Eating, Mindful Life*. HarperOne. www.savorthebook.com

Mindful eating is the mindfulness practice for when we are preparing and eating our food. Mindful eating is not a diet; rather, it is an increased awareness of our relationship with the foods and drinks we consume, and how they affect our body, our feelings, and our thoughts.

Mindful eating helps us to be alert as to how external cues and our surroundings shape our consumption and lifestyle behaviors. When we eat mindfully, we focus not only on *what we eat*, but also *why we eat*, *how we eat*, and gain a greater understanding of *why we eat what we eat*. We also cultivate awareness of what reinforces our unhealthy habits, as well as what deters us from, or motivates us in maintaining, a healthy lifestyle.

(Handout and discuss, if desired, the 7 Practices of a Mindful Eater from the Additional Resources folder on this Web Resource for more information on mindful eating.)

SOURCE:

Hanh & Cheung. (2010). *Savor: Mindful Eating, Mindful Life*. HarperOne.

Spirit: Activities to Enhance Social and Spiritual Wellness

- **Journal writing and writing groups**
- **Spending time in nature**
- **Gardening**
- **Painting**
- **Singing**
- **Listening to music**
- **Meditation**
- **Yoga, Tai Chi**

Finally, let's hear the report from the Spirit group.

(Use the points on this slide to review and enhance the reports of the group.)

Spirit touches on a sensitive and sometimes controversial topic: an individual's inner peace and well-being. Wellness is based on individual choice.

Spirituality is extremely individualistic and is not necessarily a function of organized religion. In addition to giving people a sense of community and tradition, spirituality, when combined with the other components of positive health promotion, may help people find strength and comfort to deal with an illness. It also may keep stress levels low, which helps people stay healthier. Here are some examples of activities addressing this area. *(Read slide.)*

Questions for Discussion

- **Why is wellness important?**
- **How would you rate the overall health of the students in this school? Why?**

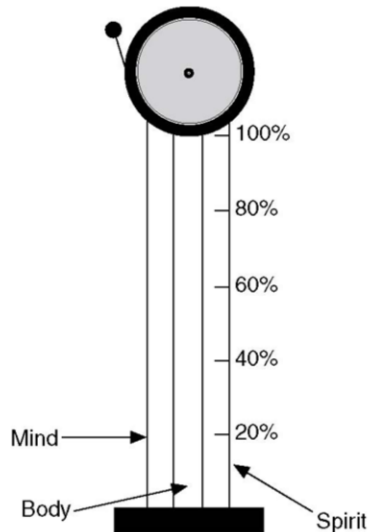
(Pose the two questions on the slide to the group for discussion.)

Why is wellness important?

(Possible answers include to raise consciousness about the many aspects of health; to enhance personal well-being through a whole-person perspective that includes body, mind, and spirit; and to identify personal health risk factors in a variety of life dimensions.)

How would you rate the overall health of the students in this school? Why?

Can You Ring the Wellness Bell?



(Distribute a Can You Ring the Wellness Bell? handout from the Additional Resources folder on this Web Resource to each participant, and go over the instructions.)

Now, here's a chance for each of us to think about our own wellness.

First, color in the wellness bell for each of the three aspects of wellness to indicate what level of wellness you have achieved today.

- For questions 1 and 2—"Things I do that help me reach 100% wellness" and "Things I do that keep me from reaching 100% wellness"—list 3 to 5 answers.
- For question 3—"What else would help me reach 100% wellness"—think of external programs, opportunities, supports, and so on that might help you reach closer to 100% wellness. These may include ways that this school or the school district administration could help you achieve wellness.

(Give participants a few minutes to complete the form. Then ask the group to form pairs and share some of their answers from each area.)

(Reconvene the group and ask for volunteers to share 1 or 2 of their answers to questions 1 and 2. Next ask for their answers to question 3 and write these on the flip chart. Highlight those suggestions that might occur in the school setting and briefly discuss what would need to happen to see them realized. Be aware that some things people have written on their sheets may be too sensitive to share with the group.)

Total Person Concept of Wellness



All 5 dimensions are equally important to the total well-being of the individual.

(Summarize the discussion by going over this diagram illustrating the total person concept of wellness.)

As you can see, all five dimensions of wellness—social, spiritual, emotional, physical, and intellectual—are equally important to the total well-being of the individual.

Stress Reduction and the Relaxation Response*

- **Stress management is a key aspect of wellness.**
- **The relaxation response is one way to practice mindfulness. It is a physical state in which heart rate, blood pressure, and muscle tension decrease.**
- **Eliciting the relaxation response can help reduce stress in our lives.**

* Adapted from the Benson-Henry Institute for Mind Body Medicine at Massachusetts General Hospital

Stress management is a key aspect of wellness, and one stress management technique involves eliciting the relaxation response, a physical state in which heart rate, blood pressure, and muscle tension decrease. Focusing on a repeated word or phrase or on the breath while disregarding everyday thoughts that come to mind can elicit the relaxation response.

Let's go through a brief exercise to demonstrate how to elicit the relaxation response.

**Adapted from the Benson-Henry Institute for Mind Body Medicine at Massachusetts General Hospital*
www.mbmi.org/basics/whatis_rresponse_elicitation.asp.

Eliciting the Relaxation Response Through Mindful Breathing

- **Sit quietly in a comfortable position.**
- **Focus on a repeated word or phrase or on the breath.**
- **Disregard everyday thoughts that come to mind.**
- **Stay focused on your word or phrase or on your breath.**

* Adapted from the Benson-Henry Institute for Mind Body Medicine at Massachusetts General Hospital

(Instructions on how to elicit the relaxation response follow:)

(1. Ask participants to pick a focus word, short phrase, or prayer that is firmly rooted in their belief systems, such as one or peace or any other word or phrase. If participants prefer, they may choose to focus on the sensation of their breath as it enters and leaves their nostrils.)

(2. Ask participants to sit quietly in a comfortable position and to close their eyes.)

(3. Guide participants to relax their muscles, progressing from their feet to their calves, thighs, abdomen, shoulders, head, and neck. Say the following:)

Start by relaxing your feet. Feel their connection to the floor. . . . Now relax your calves, releasing any tension, and relax your knees and thighs. . . . Feel the weight of your body sinking into the chair. . . . Take a deep breath, and when you exhale, relax the muscles of your belly. . . . Relax your shoulders, releasing all the tension that they hold. . . . Relax your neck. . . . Feel the muscles of your face and your scalp relax . . . even relax your ears.

(4. Instruct participants to focus on their chosen word or phrase, as follows:)

Breathe slowly and naturally and say your focus word, sound, phrase, or prayer

silently to yourself as you exhale. *(Alternatively, participants may focus on the sensation of their breath as it passes through their nostrils. Say the following:)*

Notice how the breath feels during each inhale; notice how it feels during each exhale.

(5. Advise participants to assume a passive attitude:)

Don't worry about how well you're doing. When other thoughts come to mind, simply say to yourself, "Oh well," and gently return to repeating your phrase silently to yourself.

(6. Let participants continue to elicit the relaxation response for 3 to 5 minutes. If desired, you may give additional prompts to focus and to assume a passive attitude.)

(7. Ask participants to slowly bring their attention back to the room. Then ask them to open their eyes and sit for another minute before speaking.)

(8. Ask participants to share their observations on eliciting the relaxation response. Tell them that to reduce stress, it is helpful to practice this technique daily for 10 to 20 minutes. Good times to do so are before breakfast and before dinner.)

**Adapted from the Benson-Henry Institute for Mind Body Medicine at Massachusetts General Hospital. Available: www.mbmi.org/basics/whatis_rresponse_elicitation.asp.*

Lifestyle Change Card

A Personal Health Declaration of Independence

I believe that among my inalienable rights are the rights to health, happiness, and a longer life. To secure these rights, I will become more conscious of the whole person that is me. This plan is duly constituted by me and will be reviewed regularly.

I pledge to put into practice, with verve, that which I have written for each area:

Physical _____

Social _____

Emotional _____

Intellectual _____

Spiritual _____

(Hand out a copy of the Lifestyle Change Card from the Additional Resources folder on the Web Resource to each participant.)

Here is your opportunity to write your own declaration of wellness. For each part of wellness (mind, body, spirit), you should write one thing that you pledge to do differently.

You can then take the card home and keep it in a place where you will frequently see it, such as on the refrigerator, on the bathroom mirror, in a wallet, or in a pocketbook.

Questions?

Any questions?

The next *Eat Well & Keep Moving* session will address the *Eat Well & Keep Moving* Principles of Healthy Living and how they relate to your health and the health of your students. Let's take a 5- to 10-minute break. (*The Principles of Healthy Living can be found in the Additional Resources folder on this Web Resource.*)