

Dimensions Criteria for Wellness: Quick Glance

There are five (5) dimensions of Wellness:

Physical, Psychological, Social, Spiritual, and Environmental.

They are interconnected and interdependent - constantly interacting with each other. Maintaining or improving one's wellness requires continuous self-reflection to be able to create "balance" or positive tension between these five dimensions in response to the events in our lives.

These efforts bring a higher QUALITY of LIFE.

Physical Dimension Criteria

This dimension deals with the functional operation of the body. In general, wellness factors related to the physical dimension can be grouped within the following categories:

1. Physical Activity and Fitness:

- Movement concepts
- Complex Skills
- Game Tactics and Strategies

2. Nutrition:

- Embracing healthy eating

3. Medical Self Care:

- Seeking appropriate medical care

4. Encouraging and Promoting Safe Behaviors:

- Avoiding harmful behaviors

Social Dimension Criteria

This dimension is broad in scope because it has to do with self and "others", including the degree and quality of interactions with others, the community, and the environment. The more individuals have a supportive social network (i.e., family, friends, community), the better their health (Miller & Foster, 2010).

- resolving conflicts and reaching consensus
- getting along with others who have differing perspectives
- feeling connected to a person, group, cause, or even a pet
- caring for others
- nurturing relationships

Psychological Dimension Criteria

Factors of wellness related to the psychological dimension can be grouped into three categories: Mental, Emotional, and Intellectual.

The MENTAL Category of the psychological dimension includes:

- reacting to difficulties and adversity in an optimistic manner
- viewing difficult situations as challenges and opportunities for growth
- adopting a positive attitude
- accepting our limitations and making the best of a bad situation

The EMOTIONAL Category of psychological wellness is the “feeling” part and includes:

- handling emotions and controlling, or coping with, personal feelings
- laughing and being able to stimulate laughter in others
- being able to express emotions appropriately and comfortably

The INTELLECTUAL Category of the psychological dimension includes:

- learning and using information effectively
- continuously acquiring knowledge throughout life
- engaging one’s mind in creative & critical thinking, keeping awareness of current events
- being curious

Spiritual Dimension Criteria

This is the “depth” dimension of life and means different things to different people. It refers to the values, beliefs, and commitments at the core of one’s being. The key aspects of spiritual wellness are the creation of personal values and beliefs toward life purpose and oneself in relation to others, the community, the environment and the universe. Spiritual well-being is the journey of contemplating and accepting one’s place in the complex and interrelated universe.

- a sense of belonging to a scheme of existence greater than the merely personal
- a sense of purpose
- an understanding that true happiness involves more than the accumulation of wealth or “stuff”
- a desire to comfort and help others
- the ability to show gratitude and generosity
- a desire to contribute to society
- a sense of wonder and awe related to the beauty, power, and mysteries of nature
- an attempt to reduce conflict and disorder

Environmental Dimension Criteria

We may not consider the impact of Environmental Wellness on our overall wellness plan, but our environment can have a huge impact on physical, psychological, social, and spiritual well-being. It includes: Cultural Environment, Natural Environment, and Constructed Environment.

The CULTURAL Category of the environmental dimension includes:

- the ability to get along with people from diverse backgrounds who express differing beliefs, values, and perspectives
- a sense of belonging to a large social unit
- the ability and willingness to reach out to others and to care for them
- the ability and willingness to invest in meaningful causes beyond ourselves
- traditions – one's own and those of various cultures
- socio-economic factors (e.g., race, income, education)
- laws and cultural practices within society

The NATURAL Category of the environmental dimension includes:

- Weather and Climate**: Heat, cold, wind, rain, sun, snow, etc. influence the activities in which we do, the illnesses and injuries we may suffer and the moods we may experience.
- Geography**: Lakes, forests, mountains, and rivers influence the activities in which we participate. Some people enjoy the wide, open spaces of the plains but feel trapped and enclosed in the mountains. Similarly, people who like the mountains and wooded areas may view the prairies as stark and empty.
- Pollution**: The quality of the food we eat, of the water we drink, and of the air we breathe is affected by a variety of pollutants (i.e., carbon monoxide in the air due to car exhausts; residues of harmful pesticides in the air, ground, and water supplies). In addition, the earth's protective ozone layer is being eaten away by human-made chemicals resulting in increasing cases of skin cancer and cataracts, and decreases in human immunities.

The CONSTRUCTED Category of the environmental dimension includes:

- We, living in modern societies, spend nearly all of our time amidst the constructed environment that consists of buildings, streets, roads, vehicles, machines, furniture, and other objects fabricated by humans. Not all of these are fashioned out of inert or dead matter. The constructed environment includes the pets we keep, the domesticated animals we rear, and the domesticated crops we grow. It is made up of anything that has come into existence entirely to serve human needs and purposes.
- Are my constructed environments contributing to or taking away from my Wellness? At home? Work? School? Areas of recreation?