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Maintaining a healthy equilibrium of well-being and wellness can be challenging. Physical health, while important, is not the only component to overall health and well-being. Other Dimensions of Wellness (DOW) take a pivotal role in the overall well-being of an individual. Understanding the importance of each dimension and the impact it has on an individual's personal and professional life, can have a powerful influence on perspective and priority. Realizing the need for balance or the reality of imbalance of the dimensions gives insight to better understand one's inner self.

Wellness can be defined as a constant and deliberate effort to stay healthy and achieve the highest potential for well-being (Hoeger & Hoeger, 2012). It is important to note that wellness incorporates aspects of health and overall well-being including more than just physical fitness. Often times, wellness and fitness are associated and rightfully so. However, the varying DOW, cover a wide range of categories involving lifestyle, personal choices and everyday surroundings.

Understanding the seven DOW can potentially help to improve or at least recognize varying influences within life, thus leading to a measure of personal growth. The dimensions can be organized into two categories, the inner and outer dimensions. The inner dimensions, which include physical, mental and emotional are self-reflecting from within the person. The outer dimensions which include social, environmental, spiritual and occupational are outer dimensions based on the surroundings and circumstances of the person.

Each dimensions plays a pivotal role within a person's life. Establishing the dimensional balance that is right for a person's life balance can help with the persons overall wellness. The inner and outer dimensions intertwine with each other and may shift in importance based on varying life events or circumstances.

## **Inner Dimensions**

Physical wellness encompasses one of the most popular thoughts of wellness, which is physical fitness. Physical wellness is known as good physical fitness and confidence in your personal ability to take care of health problems (Hoeger & Hoeger, 2012). This dimension covers aspects of physical health, exercising, proper nutrition and living a healthy lifestyle.

Incorporating physical wellness into a lifestyle may lead to increased confidence, and improved physical abilities. Other aspects of a healthy lifestyle include maintaining the recommended body weight, sufficient amounts of sleep, and avoiding harmful drugs and environmental contaminants (Hoeger & Hoeger, 2012).

As noted by Hoeger and Hoeger (2012), physical wellness is not solely the absence of disease. This dimension encompasses the aspect of taking care of oneself externally with exercise and internally with proper nutrition. Physically wellness is also closely associated with good health.

Mental wellness includes having the mind engaged in lively interaction with the surrounding world (Hoeger & Hoeger, 2012). Additionally, Samhsa (2017) notes that high mental wellness also reflects looking for opportunities to expand knowledge and skills. This dimension relates to areas involving the mental stability of the mind and overall mindset; is the glass half empty or half full? Being mentally wellness can also incorporates the idea of being self-confident and having an eagerness to learn about unknown topics and differences within the world (Hoeger & Hoeger, 2012).

Emotional wellness deals with feelings from within a person. According to Samhsa (2017) emotional wellness is the ability to cope with life effectively and creating new and positive relationships. This dimension is the core personality and attitude of a person. Hoeger

and Hoeger (2012) define emotional wellness as understanding one's feelings, accepting limitations and achieving emotional stability. Emotionally well people typically do not get too high or too low regardless of the circumstances. The ability to understand and control feelings when encountering extremely positive or negative situations is important for emotional wellness.

### **Outer Dimensions**

As defined by Hoeger and Hoeger (2012) social wellness mainly consist of the ability to relate well with other people. Typically socially well people have confidence to be outgoing and friendly with other people regardless of the relationship. Ultimately people that are socially well establish and maintain the ability to have close relationships with people (Hoeger & Hoeger, 2012). Additionally, as noted by Donatelle, Snow and Wilcox (1999) social wellness revolves around establishing and maintaining interpersonal relationships

The environment can play a major factor in health and wellness. Environmental wellness encompasses being in clean and safe surroundings not detrimental to health (Hoeger & Hoeger, 2012). Components of environmental wellness are clean air, minimal secondhand smoke, minimal loud noise and adequate shelter.

Spiritual wellness is the foundational portion of the inner personality. While spirituality can be associated with religion, within the DOW it is more incorporating self-reflection. According to the institute of wellness (2017), spiritual wellness covers the core values, identity and purpose of a person. All three of these attributes have a major role in a person's personal and professional life.

Occupational wellness is dealing with the ability to perform one's job skillfully and effectively within an environment that provides both personal and team satisfaction (Hoeger & Hoeger, 2012). The main premise of occupational wellness is not tied to salary, but more so

satisfaction with one's work and feeling like the work is a rewarding experience. According to Samhsa (2017), this dimension derives from enrichment and genuine satisfaction a person receives while performing the particular job function.

### **Additional Dimensions**

Financial wellness is not one of the seven foundational dimensions of wellness, but has its own relevance in life. The primary basis of this dimension is having a satisfaction with current and future financial situations (Samhsa, 2017). Understanding financial obligations, limitation and responsibilities is an important part of financial wellness.

### **Summary**

Each of the dimensions plays a pivotal role in the balance of life. However, each dimension may not be created equally for an individual or during a certain portion of an individual's life. The basis of the dimensions is to understand an individual's lifestyle; from that understanding an individual can then concentrate on area(s) that are well and recognize other areas that may be not so well. The beauty of the dimensions is that they all intertwine and complement each other in some fashion. Additionally, life is always changing so keeping a healthy balance of the dimensions maybe easier some days than others.

It is important to remember that balancing the DOW evenly everyday may not be necessary or even feasible. The most important take away is understanding the role each of the DOW has in an individual's life. Furthermore, incorporating aspects of the DOW in an individual's life at the right time as needed is a fundamental key of overall wellness. The DOW can be a guide to live a healthier and happier life. Each dimension has aspects that can affect both personal and professional life. Finding a balance that works specifically for a person of the dimensions in one's life is what can ultimately lead to overall wellness.

## References

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