



Wellness in 8 Dimensions (8D)



Wellness in eight dimensions is a model or framework I developed decades personally and in my work as an occupational therapist. Close to 25 years ago, we incorporated wellness in our work at the CSPNJ for people living with mental health, substance use, and trauma related challenges. Since the model has been expanded for youth, family caregivers, educators,



healthcare professionals and in many workplaces. Consider how wellness in 8 D can be a framework to guide you and how you can share with others.

Each dimension of wellness can affect overall quality of life because wellness directly relates to how long we live (longevity) and how well we live (quality of life). A wellness lifestyle includes a self-defined balance of health habits. It is important to note the emphasis on *self-defined* because everyone has individual needs and preferences, and the optimal balance of activity, social contact, and sleep varies from person to person.

Seeking satisfaction and well-being in each dimension and creating a balance across dimensions contributes to overall Wellness. Defining the desired balance and determining well-being in any specific dimension will be unique for each person.

As you begin 2023, please reach out and share how you are using the wellness in 8 D model for yourself or how you are sharing with others.

Emotional Wellness: Recognizing and expressing our feelings helps us adjust to emotional challenges and cope with life's stressors. Emotional and mental well-being lets us take on challenges and assess our strengths, limitations, and any areas we want to develop further. We can balance our ability to live and work independently while seeking and appreciating support and assistance. Emotional wellness activities help us manage life's ups and downs. Emotional wellness includes recognizing conflict as being potentially healthy. Expressing disagreement can be a sign of trust and caring, an opportunity to learn about others' points of view, and the path to a new and closer connection. Peace and harmony come from tolerance, awareness, and acceptance of a wide range of feelings in ourselves and others. Many simple self-care habits can help maintain or restore emotional balance.

<https://www.center4healthandsdc.org/journaling-tool.html>

Physical Wellness: Attending to your body and noting signs of stress can help you stay well. Balance within the physical dimension means creating a self-defined daily routine that includes adequate sleep and rest, walking or physical activity and doing activities that help us relax even for a few minutes especially when faces with stress. These all can counteract negative stress responses. Achieving physical wellness requires recognizing our basics needs while discouraging the use of tobacco, drugs, and excessive alcohol consumption. Taking care of physical health includes learning to assume personal responsibility and care for minor illnesses and knowing when professional medical attention is needed. Check our Enhancing Immune health resource for many ideas for physical social and emotional wellness.

<https://www.center4healthandsdc.org/enhancing-immune-health.html>

Financial Wellness: Financial wellness refers to objective factors—things you can *count or measure* about your own personal financial situation. This includes the size of your income, how much debt you have, and your credit rating. Financial wellness also refers to subjective factors, such as how you *feel* about money, your *opinions*, and your *beliefs*. Check our Financial Wellness curriculum.

<https://www.center4healthandsdc.org/building-financial-wellness.html>

Social Wellness: Our ability to communicate is key to social wellness and many other wellness dimensions. We need to be able to express our needs and ideas with people who support and care about us and to listen to others with an open mind. Personal relationships are important, as well as connection with people who are not especially close to us. Belonging to communities we value gives us a foundation for relationships and shared identity. Pets also provide a social connection for many. Like all other dimensions, people's social connectedness and social wellness vary greatly. Some people have a few relationships; others have many. Some people have most of their relationships in one area of their lives, such as at work; others have broader relationships.

Relationships involve reciprocity and equality—giving as well as receiving. In the new year think about the places and spaces where you can spend time with others, provide and receive support, and nurture many of the other wellness dimensions.

New Resource: Wellness Inventory

Are you interested in taking a closer look at your own wellness? Do you support others who are interested in helping yourself or others to improve wellness in one specific dimension? You may be interested in the **Wellness in 8 D Inventory**. This *Inventory* gives you a way of thinking about what you are doing now for your personal wellness and help you to expand wellness habits and routines.

<https://alcoholstudies.rutgers.edu/wellness-in-recovery/quiz/>

Spiritual Wellness: Personal beliefs and values are a component of the spiritual dimension, along with having meaning and purpose and developing a sense of balance and peace. The spiritual dimension may be closely related to cultural, religious, and/or spiritual traditions and practices, but is not the same as religious faith. Our spiritual dimension recognizes our search for meaning and purpose in human existence. It includes the development of a deep appreciation for the depth and expanse of life and the natural forces that exist in the universe. Healing and good health are enhanced by engaging in activities that are aligned with our personal values, and beliefs. Spiritual wellness activities provide a sense of connectedness and can enhance healing and our sense of wholeness. Check our Wellness Activity resource for lots of ideas for spiritual, emotional and many other wellness dimensions.

<https://www.center4healthandsdc.org/wellness-activities.html>

Occupational Wellness: Many people find meaning and purpose through work, but occupational wellness is more than a job or career. Occupational wellness includes those activities that are fulfilling and rewarding, linked to our social roles such as student, caregiver, employee, or community volunteer. Personal satisfaction and enrichment in one's life is derived from occupational wellness activities from which we derive pleasure and satisfaction. Being engaged in these meaningful activities is important for occupational wellness. Ending your day with a sense of accomplishment and, the next morning, facing a new day with a plan and commitment to planned activities is part of occupational wellness. As with other dimensions, achieving a sense of balance is important—both within the occupational dimension and across the other wellness dimensions.

<https://www.center4healthandsdc.org/wellness-activities.html>

Intellectual Wellness: The intellectual dimension can be activated through a wide array of activities. Many people set time regularly to pursue personal interests, such as reading books, magazines, and newspapers and engaging in other means of keeping abreast of current issues and ideas. Recognizing our creative abilities and expanding our knowledge and skills contribute to intellectual wellness. Lifelong learning and applying what we learn contributes to discovering the potential for our intellectual abilities and sharing those gifts with others.

Challenging your mind by learning new skills, a new language, or new information may contribute to your intellectual wellness now and help keep your mind healthy for the future. Doing puzzles or playing games like chess may not have wide-ranging positive effects or cause long-term improvements in anything other than that sort of puzzle or game. However, many people find such activities help them unwind, even while they require a mental workout—another example of how wellness in one dimension can help build wellness in other dimensions!

Environmental Wellness: Have you ever been to a place that makes you feel calm, peaceful, or refreshed? Where we are and where we go affect how we feel, across many dimensions. The spaces around us influence what we can do and what we want to do. Our environments include where we spend a lot of time living, learning, and working, as well as the places we go for short visits, and the larger communities where we participate as citizens. Good health can be fostered by occupying pleasant, stimulating environments that support our well-being. Additionally, wellness can be enhanced by places and spaces that promote learning, contemplation, and eliciting the relaxation response. Environmental wellness involves being able to be and feel physically safe, in safe and clean surroundings, with access to clean air, food, and water. A safe, decent, and affordable living space is an important foundation for environmental wellness.

Wellness Resources

<https://cspnj.org/wellness-institute/>

<https://cspnj.org/wellness-resource/>

<https://alcoholstudies.rutgers.edu/wellness-in-recovery/wellness-resources/physical>

<https://www.center4healthandsdc.org/solutions-suite.html>

CSPNJ

Collaborative Support Programs of New Jersey, Inc., is a peer-led not-for-profit organization that offers services that promote wellness. Our Wellness Institute provides innovative and state-of-the-art services and tools designed to help individuals pursue their own paths to wellness. Reach out to share how you are applying the wellness in 8 D model personally and in your work or community. Contact us if you would like to learn more about wellness resources or the *Wellness in 8 D inventory* pswarbrick@cspnj.org.



EMOTIONAL

Coping effectively with life and creating satisfying relationships.

ENVIRONMENTAL

Good health by occupying pleasant, stimulating environments that support well-being.

INTELLECTUAL

Recognizing creative abilities and finding ways to expand knowledge and skills.

PHYSICAL

Recognizing the need for physical activity, diet, sleep, and nutrition.

FINANCIAL

Satisfaction with current and future financial situations.

SOCIAL

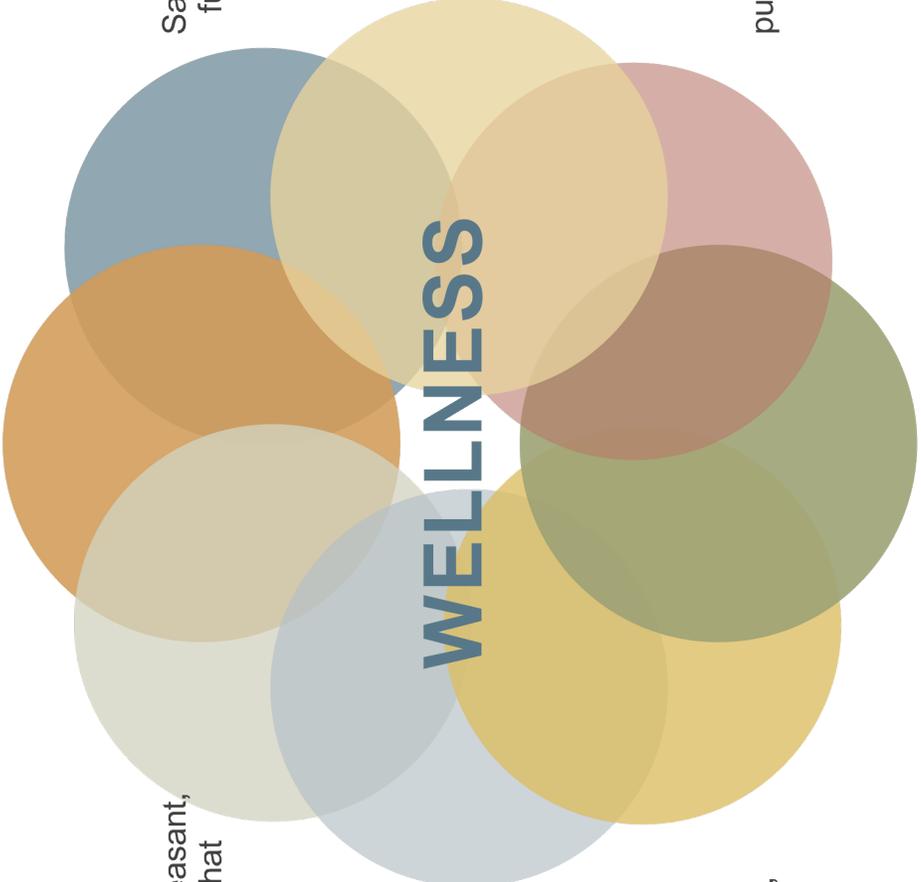
Developing a sense of connection, belonging, and a well-developed support system.

SPIRITUAL

Expanding our sense of purpose and meaning in life.

OCCUPATIONAL

Personal satisfaction and enrichment derived from one's work.



WELLNESS