

How to Develop a Wellness Program in Your Life

It's important for all of us to take responsibility for our health and overall wellness in life. If you want to improve how you feel, how you look, or any other component in your life, developing a wellness program is the way to go!

Developing your own personal wellness program will enable you to fully understand what it means to have a "life-balance" and give you a plan for achieving it.

Evaluating Your Life

There are several key areas in your life that you should review when developing your wellness program. All of these areas are important, yet some of them are often ignored because of our busy schedules. These key areas include the following:

- Diet
- Exercise
- Sleep
- Thoughts
- Leisure Time
- Feelings
- Spiritual

In order to create a program that ensures your wellness, it's important to include all of these areas in your plan. This is because, ultimately, all of these key areas have a place in how we feel – both physically and psychologically.

Elements of a Wellness Plan

We often focus on what isn't the way we want. A program that focuses on how "well" you are. Start by shifting your focus from what isn't the way you want it, to what is working and what you would like to add to your life with regards to your wellness. A good start is with a diet that includes healthy foods. These include nutritionally sound foods. My learning in this area is ongoing, but here is what I have learned. Focus on consuming fresh plant foods – like fruits and vegetables – rather than the prepackaged foods in the store. Eating nuts and drinking lots of water can also be especially helpful.



Exercise is another important element of success when it comes to developing a wellness program. Movement can help us move energy from unwanted emotions out of the body.

·Exercising doesn't mean spending lots of money on a gym membership. There are a lot of great workout DVDs and even workouts you can access on YouTube. Walk around your block, park a little further from the door, take the stairs instead of the elevator, or walk through a nearby mall and you'll see the benefits. My favourite aside from walking is dancing. Get those tunes playing and get moving!

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Another part of a wellness program is to ensure that your thoughts and feelings are positive and complimentary to your life. Having a support group or someone to talk to about issues that concern you can be very productive. Have you heard about gratitude practices? The shift in focus while practicing gratitude contributes to positive feelings.

In addition, learning how to manage stress can be extremely beneficial to your wellness journey. If certain people or places cause you to experience stress, depression, or other negative feelings, then it's important to pull yourself away from them or find a productive means for coping with them.

Talking to a friend, family member, spiritual leader, or counsellor can provide great comfort. These people can offer you objective advice and other ideas on how to deal with the stressors in your life.

Include your spiritual self in your wellness approach. Prayer, meditation and other spiritual practices are known to ground, centre and provide peace. For many, myself included, getting out into nature can be part of your spiritual practice.

Remember, you are a whole person and your approach to wellness will be beneficial when considering the unique aspects of who you are. Ask yourself where do you find your peace and what contributes to you feeling your best. Consider the key areas of wellness when creating your wellness plan. By following these techniques to develop your own wellness program, you'll enhance your life well into the future!



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