DEFINITIONS OF HEALTH/WELLNESS

World Health Organization's (WHO) definition of Health

Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.

The correct bibliographic citation for the definition is: Preamble to the Constitution of the World Health Organization as adopted by the International Health Conference, New York, 19-22 June, 1946; signed on 22 July 1946 by the representatives of 61 States (Official Records of the World Health Organization, no. 2, p. 100) and entered into force on 7 April 1948.The Definition has not been amended since 1948.

The Alliance Institute for Integrative Medicine

We view wellness as much more than just a state of physical health. It also encompasses emotional stability, clear thinking, the ability to love, create, embrace change, exercise intuition and experience a continuing sense of spirituality.

Our mission is for all who enter our doors to take one step closer to this state of vibrant health and well-being.

National Wellness Institute

Wellness is an active process of becoming aware of and making choices toward a more successful existence.

The key words in this first sentence are process, aware, choices and success. Process means that we never arrive at a point were there is no possibility of improving.

Aware means that we are by our nature continuously seeking more information about how we can improve.

Choices means that we have considered a variety of options and select those that seem to be in our best interest.

Success is determined by each individual to be their personal collection of accomplishments for their life.

Wellness is multidimensional. A popular model adopted by many university, corporate, and public health programs encompasses 6 dimensions:

Social
Occupational
Spiritual
Physical
Intellectual
Emotional

[What Wellness Means at ASU (Arizona State University)]

Wellness is an active, lifelong process of becoming aware of choices and making decisions toward a more balanced and fulfilling life. Wellness involves choices about our lives and our priorities that determine our lifestyles.

The wellness concept at ASU is centered on connections and the idea that the mind, body, spirit and community are all interrelated and interdependent

[Webster's 1913 Dictionary definition of Health]

The state of being hale, sound, or whole, in body, mind, or soul; especially, the state of being free from physical disease or pain.

[University of Buffalo, The State University of New York re. Wellness]

Wellness is the conscious development of the whole self. Embarking on a wellness journey is a process of searching for the appropriate "tools" to make you a healthier and happier human being, plus discovering your own effective methods to use these "tools" for continued growth and development. As there is a great variety on all aspects of life, there are also countless ways to cultivate yourself on an ever-changing path of wellness.

The National Wellness Institute now recognizes eight "dimensions," or essential life areas which collectively comprise the wellness (well-being) of all human beings...

The Eight Dimensions of Wellness:

- Spiritual
- Emotional
- Intellectual
- Physical
- Cultural
- Occupational
- Social
- Environmental

- Precepts for Wellness

It is important to see that all of the various concepts of wellness should include at least the following precepts:

Holism - your health and well-being are the outcomes of the constant interaction between the several natural dimensions of life and wellness. Each dimension is inter-related with the others. The aim is to be conscious of your self as a whole and complete person, living life as fully as possible.

Balance - while acknowledging the constantly changing nature of your life, you look to balance it by giving significant attention to each of the dimensions.

Lack of sufficient attention to any one dimension will result in less-than-optimal development as a person, and may possibly lead to chronic unhappiness.

Self-Responsibility - a well person owns up to his or her responsibility for health and happiness and does not allow others to take control over decisions he/she needs to make for him/herself. Self-responsibility presupposes self-awareness, including the process by which one becomes increasingly more aware of both the causes and consequences of his/her behavior.

Positive and Proactive - wellness requires primarily positive perspectives and values by which to live. It also requires a strong sense of purpose and conscious, deliberate action.

These are our starting assumptions, and they have stood well through time. However, they provide merely a simple framework. What you put inside that framework is totally up to you. We wish you well on your unique path to greater experiences of well-being.

According to Dorland's Medical Dictionary, the definition of health is, "An optimal state of physical, mental and social well-being, not merely the absence of disease or infirmity."

Dr. Thomas M. Rau, Paracelsus Clinic

In Biological Medicine, "illness is defined as a loss of regulatory capacity: that is, the inability to correctly respond to a wide variety of internal, environmnetal and lifestyle factors....Healing is defined as restoration of regulatory capacity".