

# Getting Healthier And Living Longer: Wellness Can Get You There

(NAPSA)—Want to live a longer and happier life? It is time to strive for wellness! Wellness is being in good physical and mental health and provides a foundation for overall wellbeing.

Everyone's routines and habits can be affected by stress (good and bad), life demands, crisis, or trauma. These changes cause emotional, social, and physical imbalances. One of the best ways to combat this is to establish healthy habits that promote wellness. As a result, satisfaction improves, connections to supportive relationships are strengthened, and energy increases.

Wellness can improve quality of life and increase years of life. Focusing on health and wellness is especially important for people with mental or substance use disorders. These individuals are likely to die decades earlier, mostly due to preventable, chronic medical conditions. Carlton Speight, public health adviser with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), says, "Many people who have experienced these disorders can achieve a full and satisfying life in the community, especially when they can access effective services and support systems."

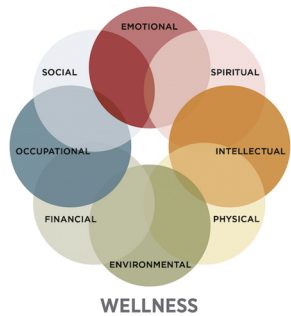
That's why SAMHSA launched the Wellness Initiative ([www.samhsa.gov/wellness-initiative](http://www.samhsa.gov/wellness-initiative)), which promotes improving mental and physical health. A hallmark of the initiative is the Eight Dimensions of Wellness ([www.samhsa.gov/wellness-initiative/eight-dimensions-wellness](http://www.samhsa.gov/wellness-initiative/eight-dimensions-wellness)), a step-by-step guide to establishing healthy habits.

The Eight Dimensions of Wellness:

**1. Physical Wellness:** Promoting good physical health habits like nutrition, exercise, sleep and appropriate health care lead to a healthier body. Creating these healthy routines and making sure there is balance with other day-to-day tasks can help, even when a person is challenged with stress or illness.

**2. Intellectual Wellness:** Learning new things and keeping the brain flexible can help expand intellect. Activities like learning about current events or organizing game nights in your home or community center can keep the brain healthy and active.

**3. Financial Wellness:** Considering how to manage income, debt, savings, and future financial stability are key to financial wellness. Starting to slowly save money or pay down debts can help increase wellness and awareness of available resources.



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**There are eight ways you can help your health and longevity.**

## **4. Environmental Wellness:**

Improving life also includes feeling and being in a safe, stable environment. The benefits of clean air, food, and water, along with occupying and preserving pleasant environments, support your happiness. Learning, contemplating, and relaxing in natural spaces builds healthy perspective and balance.

**5. Spiritual Wellness:** Taking time to focus on personal beliefs and values—if this is personally important—increases wellness. It includes the search for meaning and purpose in human existence, and developing an appreciation for life and the natural forces that exist in the universe.

**6. Social Wellness:** Healthy relationships with friends, family, and community are a part of overall happiness and support. Having an interest in and concern for the needs of others and humankind is also a part of building social wellness.

**7. Occupational Wellness:** Activities—including employment—should provide meaning and purpose and reflect personal values, interests, and beliefs. Having work-life balance, promoting open communication in work relationships, and striving for accomplishment builds contentment and wellness.

**8. Emotional Wellness:** Honoring personal strengths, while also recognizing when help may be needed, creates a more balanced life. It becomes easier to express feelings, adjust to emotional challenges, and cope with stressors.

Learn more about the eight dimensions of wellness and how to apply them to your life with SAMHSA's workbook: "Creating a Healthier Life: A Step-By-Step Guide to Wellness." You can also find additional information on mental health and wellness by visiting [www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov).