



Four Pillar of Wellbeing

every connection matters™



Wellbeing, mental health, happiness, flourishing, and thriving – synonymous words that imply that one is living a meaningful and purposeful life. One filled with joy, contentment, connection, and purpose.

So what is the magic combination in achieving such a state of wellbeing? Why is mental health so significant to our overall sense of wellbeing? How does it give rise to happiness, contentment, and purpose, and how does it propel us to live a life worth living where we can fulfil our goals and most cherished dreams?

These are all very important questions that deserve answers and contemplation – but more importantly, these are questions that deserve implementation in our lives. While we may not have all the answers, it is fair to say that, as human beings, we want to experience life free of pain and suffering, where we can enjoy what this tapestry of life has to offer and make the most of our time here.

There are four key pillars fundamental to our overall mental health and wellbeing: mind and mental wellbeing, body and physical health, spirit and happiness, and relationships and community. These pillars focus on four main dimensions of the human experience and capture the individual as a “whole being”.

Mind and Mental Wellbeing

When we think about mental health there is often a misconception or a negative association that is formed with mental illness or a 'problem' requiring treatment or resolution. Although this can apply in some cases, it is important that we also recognise and accept mental health as a fundamental pillar in our overall wellbeing and the proactive steps we can take to maintain healthy functioning in our daily lives.

Mental wellbeing cannot happen without the mind's involvement. The good news is that the mind is a powerful muscle we can train just like we would train our physical muscles at the gym through weight-lifting and exercise.

It is often said that the brain is “malleable” and, as such, new neural pathways may form with enough persistence. This persistence is in our thinking. Thinking that is conducive to our wellbeing is life-enhancing, free of limiting beliefs, negativity, and pessimism. If the way we think can positively influence our mental wellbeing and overall health, then why not nourish the brain with all the right ingredients to help us grow and flourish?

Strategies such as acknowledging and celebrating your emotions, understanding and accepting failure, building and maintaining resilience, and partaking in mindfulness activities, can all assist in improving your mental wellbeing.

Body and Physical Health

Physical activity is not only a great way to keep you physically healthy but can also improve your mental wellbeing. Our bodies and minds are connected, with research showing that physical health and mental health are connected.

Becoming more conscious of your physical health and the consequences of your choices can lead to positive outcomes for your mental health, while a better mental health status can lead to more physical activity and healthy lifestyle choices.

Regular physical activity, whether it is an hour, thirty minutes, or even five minutes a day, is an investment in your mind and body.

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There are several other activities we can undertake to improve our body and physical health. Maintaining a regular bedtime routine, sustaining good nutrition, and celebrating a healthy body image can all support our wellbeing. Completing stretching activities, like yoga, can also help relieve tension, reduce stress, and increase blood circulation.

Spirit and Happiness

What does having spiritual health look like and feel like? What makes this pillar of health instrumental to our experience of happiness? Given that our spiritual health is intrinsically interwoven with our beliefs, attitudes, and values, it is safe to assume that it becomes the overarching pillar of our overall mental wellbeing, providing us with meaning and purpose in our lives.

Our connection with our spiritual health has been shown to positively impact our capacity for emotion regulation, which, in turn, improves mental health. It can also play a role in calming one's mind and giving a positive attitude.

Self-reflecting and developing a belief within yourself are two simple strategies that can boost spiritual health. Understanding happiness is another strategy you can undertake to support your spiritual wellbeing.

Relationships and Community

Human beings are wired for connection. We are social animals and, as such, are not designed to exist in isolation or to experience loneliness. This might also explain the many interpersonal and mental health challenges people experienced during the harsh lockdowns during the pandemic.

Our need for connection has an evolutionary basis. Research conducted on primates has revealed that when we separate a couple of chimpanzees, one will die prematurely; essentially, the partner dies from separation and heartbreak.

Having friends and social connections is good for your health and wellbeing, with many proven benefits, including lowered anxiety and depression, increased self-esteem, higher levels of empathy, and increased trust.

Social connections include our intimate connections, such as family and friends, relational connections like those we see regularly at work, and our collective connections, like those we have with people we share a group membership or affiliation with.

Supporting our sense of social connection doesn't have to come from making friends or increasing our network. It can come from increasing your awareness of the relationships and connections you have. A simple strategy is understanding our emotional needs in a relationship and observing what bring to them, receive from them, and get given in return.

Another strategy we can practice is understanding and utilising effective communication styles, as well as understanding and combating loneliness.

Final Words

Consciously making an effort to lead a purposeful and meaningful life where happiness is at the core and forefront of your choices, will, in turn, provide you with optimal wellbeing. Invest in yourself, because no matter where you are in life, you are of value and the time you take is time well spent.



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