

Wellness

Forty million Americans suffer with arthritis.

Sixty million have high blood pressure.

One million will be diagnosed with cancer this year alone.

Eighty percent of the population will at one time have “back problems.”

Thirty million will experience a clinical depression at one point in their lives.

Each year the incidences of these and other conditions increase!!

Choices of treatment are often medication or surgery, which may cause further problems.

Are these truly choices???

The only portion that allows choice and discounts chance is to avoid behaviors that contribute to disease.

Choose wellness and prevention!!

The National Wellness Institute at the University of Wisconsin divides wellness into six dimensions:

Physical wellness – Maintaining your fitness and strength, eat a nourishing and balanced diet, and engage behaviors that promote physical health. Exercise, nutrition, and safety encourage health and promote vitality, energy, and enthusiasm.

Join an exercise class ! Plan a healthy diet! Take a long walk!

Emotional wellness – Your awareness and acceptance of feelings. This includes positive and enthusiastic attitudes about yourself and your life, your ability to appropriately control feelings and behaviors, acknowledging your limitations, and your capacity to cope with stress and adversity.

Explore your feelings! Talk to friends, family, or a counselor! Let go of your “stuff”!

Intellectual wellness – Your participation in creative, stimulating mental activities. Use resources to gain knowledge, improve your skills, and expand your potential for interpersonal relationships. Benefits include better problem solving skills, a greater knowledge base, and improved chances for success.

Read a book! Engage in stimulating conversation with a friend! Take a class!

Occupational wellness – Your personal gains in an enriched work experience. This includes a sense of direction, the fulfillment of goals, gaining confidence, and having a feeling of achievement.

Talk to your boss! Go the extra mile! Find another job if this one doesn't fit!

Social wellness – Your contribution to the common welfare of the community, making friends, and having meaningful relationships. You will be happier, more satisfied, establish stable relationships, and feel a sense of belonging.

Join an organization! Maintain contact with friends and family! Help a neighbor!

Spiritual wellness – Your quest for meaning and purpose in human existence, including a deep appreciation, respect, and awe for life and universal natural forces.

Meditate! Spend time getting to know yourself! Explore nature!

It takes time, which most of us don't have, to work towards staying healthy. But remember, if you don't volunteer time to maintain wellness, the dis-ease will take it without consent!

Your in-box will always be full! Choose to take care of you!

Emotional Wellness

Across the course of a lifetime, most of us will experience several personally traumatic incidents. The break up of an important relationship, serious conflict within our family, failing an important exam, the death of a friend or family member, an unwanted pregnancy, a serious health problem, or being victimized by a violent act can all cause psychological upset. Although painful, our feelings are normal reactions to these events and are part of the natural healing process. But who teaches us how to effectively deal with these emotions? Usually, we develop our own personal ways of coping. However, sometimes they are not the best ways and we get involved in thought processes and behaviors that don't serve us as well as others might.

Seeking the advice and perspective of a counselor can help you evaluate your coping strategies, provide the tools to overcome overwhelming and disruptive emotions, and help rebuild your confidence. Some people are reluctant to see a counselor for a number of reasons. However, as they recognize the negative impact of stress, they are also learning that effective coping skills can promote emotional and physical wellness.

Individual, couples, or group counseling can provide relief from the emotional distress that is upsetting your life and keeping you from wellness! How do you know if counseling would help you along the path to emotional wellness? Pay attention to your feelings and behavior. You may want to speak with someone if you are experiencing some of the following reactions:

Physical Reactions: Fatigue, insomnia, hypersomnia, under activity, headaches, nightmares, hyperactivity, startle reactions, exhaustion, or diarrhea.

Cognitive Reactions: Difficulty with concentration, solving problems, making decisions, memory disturbance, flashbacks, or inability to attach importance to anything other than the incident.

Emotional Reactions: Fear, guilt, emotional numbing, over sensitivity, anger, irritability, anxiety, depression, violent fantasies, feelings of helplessness, amnesia for the event, or ambivalence.

If you are concerned about yourself or someone experiencing these or any other reactions that are causing distress or if you would like more information about maintaining psychological wellness, please note that there are a number of resources available. If you are a student at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette and would like to speak to a counselor, please contact the Counseling & Testing center at 337 482-6480. The center offers unlimited confidential sessions, free of charge to all students and university faculty/staff members.