

Happy New Year!

We are launching a new series of our newsletter, *Words of Wellness*, which we like to call *WoW!* We will send out a short issue each month. We welcome your feedback, questions, and suggestions for future topics.

Wellness in 8 Dimensions

Wellness is the feeling that things are going well for us today, and can continue to go well for us tomorrow. It is the belief that we have meaningful relationships and a sense of meaning and purpose. Wellness is a conscious, deliberate process requiring being aware of and making daily lifestyle choices.

Wellness incorporates all of the eight dimensions shown here. The image shows how each dimension influences and connects with the others. This model was developed by the Wellness Institute as a framework for recovery (mental health, substance use, and trauma).



Throughout 2018, we invite you to consider this framework as a guideline for your life, whether you are seeking and using services, delivering services, or helping to operate a social service or behavioral healthcare system.

Seeking satisfaction and well-being in each dimension across dimensions contributes to overall Wellness. Each dimension of wellness can affect overall quality of life, because wellness directly relates to how long we live (longevity) and how well we live (quality of life).

Each month, throughout 2018, we will explore different wellness dimensions, resources, and topics. You will learn more about each dimension, or some aspect of that dimension, including what research says about it, specific

tips, and strategies that you can use. This month introduces all eight dimensions, updating similar summaries provided in past issues of *WoW!*

Emotional Wellness

Recognizing and expressing our feelings helps us adjust to emotional challenges and cope with life's stressors. Emotional and mental well-being lets us take on challenges and assess our strengths, limitations, and any areas we want to develop further. We can balance our ability to live and work independently while seeking and appreciating support and assistance. Wellness doesn't mean everything is wonderful all the time, but means that life, on balance, is going well and that we have the capacity to manage the ups and downs.

Emotional wellness includes recognizing conflict as being potentially healthy. Expressing disagreement can be a sign of trust and caring, an opportunity to learn about others' points of view, and the path to a new and closer connection. Peace and harmony come from tolerance, awareness, and acceptance of a wide range of feelings in ourselves and others. Emotional health helps us build the relationships we need and want.

Financial Wellness

Of course, the financial dimension includes having enough money to meet our basic needs, which is an ongoing challenge for many people with mental health and/or substance use challenges.

Three financial capabilities, identified by Oscar Jiménez-Solomon and his associates, help us plan for a secure future.

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When we have financial control, we can rest assured that we direct our financial decisions—no one can tell us what we can and can't buy, and we can decide what's important and what's not. Financial stability means we have enough income to meet our needs, repay any debts, and maybe even put a little aside. This helps when an unexpected expense arises. Built on financial stability, financial security is having enough for now and in the future, and not worrying about money all the time.



Reference: Jiménez-Solomon et al. (2016). Peer-supported economic empowerment: A financial wellness intervention framework for people with psychiatric disabilities. *Psych Rehab Journal* 39(4), 222-233. doi: 10.1037/prj0000210

Financial wellness refers to objective factors—things you can *count or measure* about your own personal financial situation. This includes the size of your income, how much debt you have, and your credit rating.

Financial wellness also refers to subjective factors, such as how you *feel* about money, your *opinions*, and your *beliefs*. People may feel discouraged or overwhelmed by a big expense they can't afford or may feel happy when they have saved up enough money to purchase something they want or to do something special.

Social Wellness

Our ability to communicate is key to social wellness and many other wellness dimensions. We need to be able to express our needs and ideas with people who support and care about us and to listen to others with an open mind. Personal relationships are important, as well as connection with people who are not especially close to us. Belonging to communities we value gives us a foundation for relationships and shared identity. Pets also provide a social connection for many.

Like all other dimensions, people's social connectedness and social wellness vary greatly. Some people have a few relationships; others have many. Some people have most of their relationships in one area of their lives, such as at work; others have broader relationships.

For many people, healthy relationships involve reciprocity and equality—giving as well as receiving. At CSPNJ, our drop-in

New Resource: Wellness Inventory

Are you interested in taking a closer look at your own wellness? Do you support others who are interested in helping yourself or others to improve wellness in one specific dimension? You may be interested in our new *Wellness Inventory*.

This *Wellness Inventory* gives you a way of thinking about what you are doing now for your personal wellness. The inventory can be used to build new wellness habits and routines.

For this tool and other resources, visit www.cspnj.org and click on "resources" under the "resources" tab.

Wellness Centers provide a place to spend time with others, provide and receive peer support, and nurture many of the other wellness dimensions. While outreach and one-to-one treatment and support can be invaluable, they may unintentionally isolate the people who use them, rather than building social connections.

Spiritual Wellness

Personal beliefs and values are a component of the spiritual dimension, along with having meaning and purpose and developing a sense of balance and peace. The spiritual dimension may be closely related to cultural, religious, and/or spiritual traditions and practices, but is not the same as religious faith. Our spiritual dimension recognizes our search for meaning and purpose in human existence. It includes the development of a deep appreciation for the depth and expanse of life and the natural forces that exist in the universe. Healing and good health are enhanced for many people by exploring and respecting, personal values and beliefs. Spiritual wellness often provides a sense of connectedness and is important for healing and wholeness.

Occupational Wellness

Many people find meaning and purpose through work, but occupational wellness is more than a satisfying job or a rewarding career. Achieving wellness involves the opportunity to participate in activities that are fulfilling and rewarding, while reflecting personal goals, values,

Occupational Wellness, continued from page 2

Interests, and beliefs. Personal satisfaction and enrichment in one's life is derived from work and volunteer activity, as well as other activities and tasks from which we derive pleasure and satisfaction.

Habits, routines, a daily structure, and meaningful activities are part of occupational wellness. Ending your day with a sense of accomplishment and, the next morning, facing a new day with a plan and commitment to planned activities is part of occupational wellness. As with other dimensions, achieving a sense of balance is important—both within the occupational dimension and across the other wellness dimensions.

Physical Wellness

Attending to your body and noting signs of stress can help you stay well. Balance within the physical dimension means creating a self-defined daily routine that includes adequate sleep and rest, walking or other exercise, appropriate levels of activity and productivity, and involvement in creative or structured activity for relaxation. These all can counteract negative stress responses. Achieving physical wellness requires recognizing the need for physical activity and a healthy, nutritious diet, while discouraging the use of tobacco, drugs, and excessive alcohol consumption. Taking care of physical health includes learning to assume personal responsibility and care for minor illnesses and knowing when professional medical attention is needed.

People with long-term health conditions benefit from good self-care and careful management of their treatment. Physical wellness strategies that benefit everyone become critical when dealing with long-term health issues. You are most likely to get the right care medical care if you educate yourself about your condition, keep track of the signs and symptoms that indicate changes (for better or for worse), and advocate for treatments that have worked well for you in the past and/or are supported by research evidence demonstrating their effectiveness.

Intellectual Wellness

The intellectual dimension can be activated through a wide array of activities. Many people find it useful to set aside time regularly to pursue personal interests, such as reading books, magazines, and newspapers and engaging in other means of keeping abreast of current issues and ideas. Recognizing our creative abilities and expanding our knowledge and skills contribute to intellectual wellness. Lifelong learning and applying what we learn contributes to discovering the potential for our intellectual abilities and sharing those gifts with others.

Challenging your mind by learning new skills, a new language, or new information may contribute to your intellectual wellness now and help keep your mind healthy for the future. Doing puzzles or playing games like chess may not have wide-ranging positive effects or cause long-term improvements in anything other than that sort of puzzle or game. However, many people find such activities help them unwind, even while they require a mental workout—another example of how wellness in one dimension can help build wellness in other dimensions!



For more information visit the Stanford University Center on Longevity at <http://longevity.stanford.edu> (click on “cognitive health” on the “mind” tab, then select “Expert Consensus on Brain Health”).

Environmental Wellness

Have you ever been to a place that makes you feel calm, peaceful, or refreshed? Where we are and where we go affect how we feel, across many dimensions. The spaces around us influence what we can do and what we want to do. Our environments include where we spend a lot of time living, learning, and working, as well as the places we go for short visits, and the larger communities where we participate as citizens.

Good health can be fostered by occupying pleasant, stimulating environments that support our well-being. Additionally, wellness can be enhanced by places and spaces that promote learning, contemplation, and eliciting

Environmental Wellness, continued from page 3

the relaxation response. Environmental wellness involves being able to be and feel physically safe, in safe and clean surroundings, with access to clean air, food, and water. Safe, decent, and affordable housing provides an important foundation for environmental wellness.



For more information on affordable housing issues and resources, go to the Technical Assistance Collaborative website at <http://www.tacinc.org/>

A Wellness Lifestyle

A wellness lifestyle includes a self-defined balance of health habits, such as adequate sleep and rest, exercise, participation in meaningful activity, nutrition, productivity, social contact, and supportive relationships. It is important to note the emphasis on *self-defined*, because everyone has individual needs and preferences, and the optimal balance of activity, social contact, and sleep varies from person to person.

Seeking satisfaction and well-being in each dimension and creating a balance across dimensions contributes to overall Wellness. Defining the desired balance and determining well-being in any specific dimension will be unique for each person.

The Science of Wellness

Recent research now supports the ancient wisdom of a holistic and multi-dimensional view of health and wellness. For example, many studies over the years have shown links across dimensions, like the intriguing finding from Sheldon Cohen and his associates that lonely people are more likely to catch the common cold than people with more satisfying social networks.



Reference: Pressman, Cohen et al. (2005). Loneliness, social network size, and immune response to influenza vaccination in college freshman. *Health Psychology, 24*(3), 297-306.

Stress and trauma play a significant role in contributing to the development of physical and mental health conditions. Exercise is recognized as effective in relieving many symptoms, such as depression and pain, and may

even protect against or slow down degenerative conditions like Parkinson's Disease.

Sleep is another critical factor. Too little or too much is linked to greater illness and a shorter life, as well as obesity, decreased concentration, and chronic pain.



For more information, see the many short and informative videos by Dr Mike Evans, on his YouTube Channel (search YouTube for "DocMikeEvans")

We will share more wellness research as we cover some of these wellness topics throughout 2018.

Wellness Advocacy and Policy

For over a decade, we have known that people who use services in a publicly funded behavioral health service system have high levels of illness and a shortened lifespan. Lack of access to medical care has likely played a part, in addition to the effects of poverty, stress, and medication side effects.

Different models exist for providing integrated and coordinated care, ranging from co-located services (medical and psychiatric care at the same location) to improved linkages across separate services. Many online resources are available on this topic, with a nice summary prepared by the Kellogg Family Foundation (Issue Brief, February 12, 2014).



For more information, search for "Promising Medicaid Models" at see www.kff.org

As we are preparing this issue, federal legislators are making decisions about taxes and the budget that are likely to have an effect on Medicaid funding. The potential effects are not yet known regarding potential changes to the Affordable Care Act, funding to implement integrated and coordinated care, and state Medicaid dollars. We encourage our readers to keep an eye on the news and explore sources for relevant and timely information from national and local policy and advocacy groups.

Wellness Tools and Strategies

In addition to the tips listed in this section, we offer many practical tools to use for yourself and to support others.



You can find tips and tools on our website (see “resources” at www.cspnj.org) and at the website www.center4healthandsdc.org, along with information to support you in using them.

Personal Strategies to Promote Overall Wellness

Mindfulness seems to have broad positive effects on many wellness dimensions, including mindfulness meditation and the specific intervention Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction, developed by Jon Kabat Zinn and his associates. Your local bookstore and the Internet offer an abundance of resources to support you in exploring mindfulness. Free downloadable guided meditations and meditation apps are available. Some of our favorites can be found through the UCLA Mindfulness Awareness Research Center.



For more information: <http://marc.ucla.edu/>

We also value the work on self-compassion by Dr. Kristin Neff, who has a lot of information and guided meditations on her website.



For more information: www.self-compassion.org

We will share specific strategies for future wellness topics in each month’s WoW newsletter, so stay tuned!

Professional Strategies to Promote Overall Wellness

Service providers have many options for supporting the overall wellness of people using their services. One obvious way is offering classes and interventions that directly target wellness. Wellness coaching can play an important role. Information, education, and inspiration can be easily integrated into waiting rooms, intakes, and existing services. Building the health literacy of people who use mental health services will increase their awareness of health issues, resources, and wellness strategies. A wellness-oriented environment supports and encourages self-care and wellness in many dimensions. For example, healthy food choices are provided, it’s easy to find the stairs if you want to skip the elevator, exercise spaces and/or groups are offered, and free flu shots are available in the fall. Is your agency wellness-oriented?

Service provider self-care is essential for being able to support others. The *Harvard Business Review* (December 2010) reports that employee wellness programs can reduce absences, burnout, and turnover; boost morale and productivity, and control agency health-related costs. In behavioral health organizations, staff who are healthy and engage in regular wellness self-care are important role models and can share personal knowledge and experience to inspire and support others.



What will you do for your wellness in 2018?



Wellness Calendar

Wellness is a conscious and deliberate process, based on self-awareness and involving many choices daily, weekly, and monthly. You can download our new *2018 Wellness Calendar*, which is designed to help you turn your attention to different aspects of wellness each month. You can use the calendar to set small achievable goals, to make plans, and to track what you do—or just as inspiration.



For this tool and other resources, visit www.cspnj.org and click on “resources” under the “resources” tab.

About CSPNJ

Collaborative Support Programs of New Jersey, Inc., is a peer-led not-for-profit organization. CSPNJ provides flexible community-based services that promote responsibility, recovery, and wellness.

Our Wellness Institute provides innovative and state-of-the-art services and tools designed to help individuals pursue their own paths to wellness.



EMOTIONAL

Coping effectively with life and creating satisfying relationships.

ENVIRONMENTAL

Good health by occupying pleasant, stimulating environments that support well-being.

INTELLECTUAL

Recognizing creative abilities and finding ways to expand knowledge and skills.

PHYSICAL

Recognizing the need for physical activity, diet, sleep, and nutrition.

FINANCIAL

Satisfaction with current and future financial situations.

SOCIAL

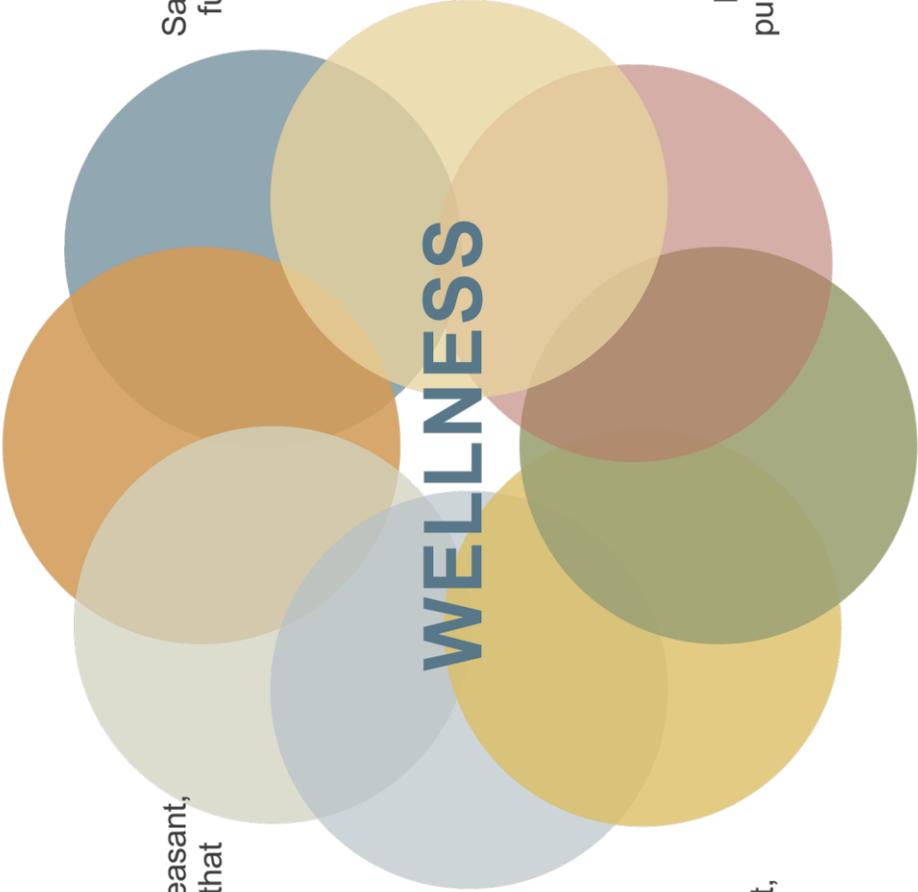
Developing a sense of connection, belonging, and a well-developed support system.

SPIRITUAL

Expanding our sense of purpose and meaning in life.

OCCUPATIONAL

Personal satisfaction and enrichment derived from one's work.



WELLNESS