

Socks for Souls by Barbara Stewart

I give away socks to people who live on the streets. I am not a 501c3 organization—just a person called to deliver socks as needed, wherever needed.

I started in 2014, around the time I connected through my church to a major Christian radio station. I went to the radio station a few times a week to participate in praying for the hundreds of people who send in prayer requests. The peaceful and calm environment had a delightful smell like no perfume but a heavenly fresh aroma in my mind. I felt embraced by all there and was so full of joy that I would bounce, bounce, bounce. They started to call me “Bubbly Barbara.”

One day, I recorded a heartfelt message about giving socks to people living on the streets. What would come of this was the opportunity to collect hundreds of socks a year, allowing me to hit the streets of Newark, Trenton, and even Philadelphia, with backpack filled to the brim with socks for people in need. Each pair of socks encloses a message from scripture. Over time, I changed the name of this personal project to “Socks for Souls of the Feet,” and the socks have traveled near and far—not just in central New Jersey, but to Kenya, Romania, Cuba, Peru, Columbia, and Ecuador. Christmas is my biggest day, when I deliver 400-500 socks. Since I started, I have probably given away close to 4000 donated pairs.

This personal mission contributes to my own wellness in many dimensions. When I am preparing the socks with scripture in each pair of socks, it gives me **emotional** calmness and peace. **Socially**, the socks are allowing me to meet many wonderful people, including people in need.

Socks for the Soul feeds me **spiritually** by giving me a strong purpose, humility, and an immense feeling of something so much bigger than myself. Although giving out the socks does not come with a paycheck, it boosts my **occupational** wellness because it has become a part of my extra curriculum of work and gives me something money cannot buy.

I get a **physical** workout, as it can take hours to prepare the socks by sorting them into men’s, women’s, and children’s (boys, girls, and toddlers). I love the physical part of working with my hands.

I have been **intellectually** enriched by leaps and bounds, learning through many people the enormous need for socks, what it takes to get the socks out, and finding out about the many places I did not know existed. I also have the intellectual challenge of seeking more places with real needs and new ways to expand the “Socks For Souls of The Feet” without losing its intention.

I am thankful to Peggy Swarbrick for teaching me about the wellness dimensions, and for the *Wellness Inventory*, which has added sanity and balance in my life. I keep it handy, not for a moment but for a lifestyle.

Did you know that...?

Foot problems are common among people who do not have addresses, including foot pain, which is a huge challenge for people on their feet up to five or more hours each day. More than one-third of people in one study reported being unable to change into clean socks every day. Many lack nail clippers, clean water to wash their feet, and access to foot care services. Providing clean socks can help reduce foot problems, including infections and complications from diabetes.

Wellness Institute Tools and Resources

This list includes links to wellness tools and resources developed by Dr. Peggy Swarbrick and the CSPNJ Wellness Institute. These are free to download and use as is. To access each tool, click on the title.

Since we hope to have our work used widely, we permit free downloads, printing, and copying, but we ask you to respect our copyright. It's fine to share these tools and resources, provided they are not changed in any way. If you do copy and share something, please be sure that the source (CSPNJ) is clearly visible when it is printed.

[Wellness Inventory](#)

This 10-page Wellness Inventory will help you think about what you are doing now in terms of your wellness habits.

[Building Financial Wellness*](#)

This curriculum imparts valuable knowledge and skills that people need to better manage their personal finances. It includes a 139-page instructor guide and an accompanying 56-page participant workbook.

[Wellness in 8 Dimensions and the Wellness Daily Plan](#)

This workbook helps people assess their strengths in each of the eight dimensions of wellness, set goals they would like to pursue, and access needed support for goal achievement. Also included are instructions for creating a daily plan for wellness activities and monitoring progress toward a healthier lifestyle.

[Physical Wellness for Work](#)

This workbook presents a number of simple and enjoyable activities designed to augment users' health and wellness for a better and more productive work day.

[Health Passport/Portable Record: Your journey to wellness*](#)

This booklet educates readers about common medical conditions in the adult population and the tests used to screen for these conditions. It also provides a portable record that can be used to record test results over time. It has been used to document screening results for nearly 500 people at health fairs across the U.S.

[Promoting Wellness for People in Mental Health Recovery: A guide to planning a successful health fair*](#)

This manual shows how to plan and conduct health fairs for participants living with mental health or substance abuse disorders. Written from a practical and experiential perspective, it includes tips and tools that grew out of health fairs conducted by these organizations across the country.

[Wellness Activity Lessons](#)

This workbook focuses on helping people with mental health conditions learn new behaviors and habits to improve their personal wellness. Each lesson has been constructed as a group activity that maximizes learning through building positive interpersonal relationships and actively involving participants.

[Journaling: A wellness tool](#)

This manual can be used to learn what wellness journaling involves and how recording your thoughts in this way can improve your personal wellness. It also can be used by groups of people who want to start a wellness journaling project.

[Five steps to mental and physical health](#)

This 2-page handout includes valuable tips to help you improve and maintain your wellness.

* *Developed in collaboration with the University of Illinois at Chicago Center for Psychiatric Disability and Co-Occurring Medical Conditions* <https://www.center4healthandsdc.org>

