

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT

NATIONAL WELLNESS WEEK

Want to Live a Longer, Healthier, Happier Life?

National Wellness Week—celebrated annually during the third week of September as part of SAMHSA’s National Recovery Month—was launched to inspire individuals and communities to incorporate the Eight Dimensions of Wellness into their lives.

Why Is Wellness Important for Individuals in Recovery?

Wellness is especially important for people with behavioral health conditions because it directly relates to their quality of life and longevity.

The sad truth is that individuals diagnosed with mental illnesses die years earlier than the general population, with heart disease being the prime culprit.ⁱ Individuals with severe mental illnesses also experience diabetes, high blood pressure and cholesterol, hypertension, and obesity at 1.5 to 2 times the rate of the general population.^{ii, iii, iv}

Unaddressed trauma can also impact overall well-being. Trauma, by its definition, has lasting adverse effects on an individual’s functioning and physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being.^v

The Wellness Difference

For people with behavioral health conditions, wellness is more than a reduction of risk factors or the absence of disease, illness, or stress.



EIGHT DIMENSIONS OF WELLNESS

EMOTIONAL—Coping effectively with life and creating satisfying relationships

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

PHYSICAL—Recognizing the need for physical activity, diet, sleep, and nutrition

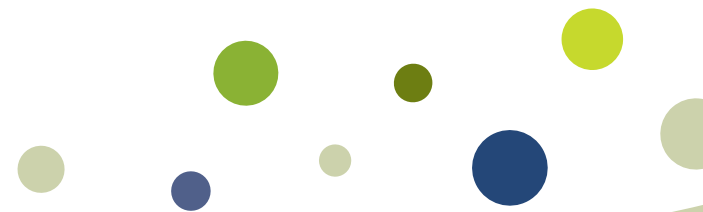
INTELLECTUAL—Recognizing creative abilities and finding ways to expand knowledge and skills

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



WELLNESS

Source: Adapted from Swarbrick, M. (2006). A Wellness Approach. *Psychiatric Rehabilitation Journal*, 29(4), 311-314.





Wellness involves having:

- Purpose in life;
- Satisfying work and play;
- Joyful relationships;
- A healthy body and living environment; and
- Happiness.^{vi}

Each of the dimensions of wellness can affect overall quality of life. That's why it's so essential to a community's wellness to provide individuals in recovery from mental or substance use disorders and trauma with opportunities to contribute to their communities as employees, parents, residents, students, volunteers, teachers, active citizens, and more.

How Can I Participate in National Wellness Week?

More than 3,500 national and community organizations have committed to promote wellness for people who have behavioral health conditions by taking action to improve the quality of life.

Here are a few examples of how organizations, providers, and partners in New York have observed National Wellness Week. New York's White Plains community formed a coalition of more than 30 different organizations to host wellness events throughout the week, including a nutrition workshop, a "wellness at work" brownbag discussion, a spirituality and wellness forum, a youth financial literacy workshop, a "power of 12 steps" workshop, a suicide prevention discussion, free fitness classes, and more.

Visit <http://www.samhsa.gov/wellness-initiative> to find and participate in activities in your area. Join others in co-creating a future in which individuals with behavioral health conditions pursue optimal health, happiness, recovery, and full and satisfying lives in the community.

E-mail wellness@samhsa.hhs.gov to share your group or organization's wellness activities and actions. We will add your updates to SAMHSA's Wellness Initiative website to let others know how you will be promoting wellness in your community.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
<http://www.hhs.gov>

SAMHSA-HRSA Center for Integrated Health Solutions
<http://www.integration.samhsa.gov/>

healthfinder®
<http://www.healthfinder.gov>

Million Hearts®
<http://www.millionhearts.hhs.gov>

STAR Center
<http://www.consumerstar.org>

National Empowerment Center
1-800-POWER2U (1-800-769-3728)
<http://www.power2u.org>

National Wellness Institute
<http://www.nationalwellness.org>

Peerlink National Technical Assistance Program
<http://www.peerlinktac.org>

ENDNOTES

- i Parks, J., Svendsen, D., Singer, P., & Foti, M. E. (Eds.). (2006). Morbidity and mortality in people with serious mental illness. Alexandria, VA: National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD) Medical Directors Council.
- ii Fagioli, A., Frank, E., Scott, J. A., Turkin, S., & Kupfer, D. J. (2005). Metabolic syndrome in bipolar disorder: Findings from the Bipolar Disorder Center for Pennsylvanians. *Bipolar Disorders*, 7(5), 424-430.
- iii McEvoy, J. P., Meyer, J. M., Goff, D. C., et al. (2005). Prevalence of the metabolic syndrome in patients with schizophrenia: Baseline results from the Clinical Antipsychotic Trials of Intervention Effectiveness (CATIE) schizophrenia trial and comparison with national estimates from NHANES III. *Schizophrenia Research*, 80(1), 19-32.
- iv Newcomer, J. W. (2005). Second-generation (atypical) antipsychotics and metabolic effects: A comprehensive literature review. *CNS Drugs*, 19(suppl 1), 1-93.
- v The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (n.d.). Trauma definition.
- vi Dunn, H. L. (1961). *High-Level Wellness*. Arlington, VA: Beatty Press.