The 9 Dimensions of Wellness: Living a Life of Joy, Awe and Laughter

CICOA Aging Advantages Summit
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The 9 Dimensions of Wellness

- Social Wellness: Participating in positive social interactions including friends, family, university and work groups
- Emotional Wellness: Developing a positive sense of self and being open to and experiencing a healthy range of emotions
- Creative Wellness: Valuing and using creativity, imagination, and the iterative process of mind and cultural resources as means to understand and appreciate the surrounding world
- Physical Wellness: Taking care of your physical health
- Environmental Wellness: Developing an awareness of the environment and the impact of the environment on your physical and mental health
- Intellectual Wellness: Engaging in intellectual pursuits, using logical thinking, critical analysis, and creative problem-solving
- Financial Wellness: Financial responsibility, budgeting, and managing debt
- Occupational Wellness: Engaging in work, volunteering, or other activities that are personally meaningful and consistent with your values, goals, and interests
- Spiritual Wellness: Engaging in spiritual practices, finding meaning and purpose in your life
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1. Emotional
2. Career
3. Social
4. Spiritual
5. Physical
6. Financial
7. Intellectual
8. Creative
9. Environmental
1. Emotional Wellness

.....Has the ability to identify, express and manage the entire range of feelings

.....Might consider seeking assistance to address areas of concern
2. Career Wellness

…..Engages in work to gain personal satisfaction and enrichment

…..Pursues a career that is consistent with values, goals and lifestyle
3. Social Wellness

.....Has a network of support based on interdependence, mutual trust and respect

.....Has developed a sensitivity and awareness towards the feelings of others
4. Spiritual Wellness

.....Seeks harmony and balance by openly exploring the depth of human purpose, meaning and connection

.....Connects through dialogue and self-reflection
5. Physical Wellness

.....Gets an adequate amount of sleep
.....Eats a balanced and nutritious diet
.....Engages in exercise for 150 minutes per week
.....Attends regular medical check-ups
.....Practices safe healthy sexual relations
6. Financial Wellness

.....Has an awareness of financial state and budgets

.....Saves and manages finances in order to achieve realistic goals
7. Intellectual Wellness

.....Values lifelong learning

.....Seeks to foster critical thinking

.....Strives to develop moral reasoning

.....Expands their worldviews

.....Engage in education for the pursuit of knowledge.
8. Creative Wellness

Values and actively participates in a diverse range of arts and cultural experiences

Pursues experiences as a means to understand and appreciate the surrounding world
9. Environmental Wellness

…..Recognizes the responsibility to preserve, protect and improve the environment

…..Appreciates the interconnectedness of nature and the individual
JOY

AWE

LAUGHTER
Joy

.....the emotion evoked by well-being, success, or good fortune or by the prospect of possessing what one desires: delight

Awe

.....an emotion variously combining dread, veneration, and wonder that is inspired by authority or by the sacred or sublime

Laugh (ter)

.....to show emotion (such as mirth, joy, or scorn) with a chuckle or explosive vocal sound
More Definitions

- Mirth - Emotional State (Bill Frye)
- Humor - Psychological State
- Laughter - Physical State

- The brain does not know the difference between “real” and “contrived” laughter
Joy is…

- You
- Love
- Magic
- Honesty
- Freedom

- Gratitude
- Inside you
- Contagious
- Authenticity
- A deep breath

- Being yourself
- Loving your life
- Living with grace
- A simple pleasure
- Transformational
- Believing in yourself
Laughter is the Primary Outer Manifestation of Joy
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Joy- an intense, momentary experience of positive emotion -- one that makes us smile and laugh and feel like we want to jump up and down.

Happiness- measures how good we feel over time

We are a culture obsessed with the pursuit of happiness, yet in the process, we often overlook joy.
Ingrid Fetell- Where Joy Hides and How to Find it, TED (2018)

- cherry blossoms, bubbles, swimming pools, tree houses, hot air balloons, googly eyes, ice cream cones (especially the ones with the sprinkles), rainbows, fireworks
- Patterns, round things, bright colors, symmetrical shapes, sense of abundance and multiplicity, feeling of lightness
Historical Research Approach

Negative Psychology

- Ratio of articles related to positive vs negative psychology.
- Gradual shift toward positive psychology
What is Awe?

- The feeling we get in the presence of something vast that challenges our understanding of the world.
- Has shifted from fright and terror to reverence or veneration
- People who describe “awe” Edmund Burke, Immanuel Kant, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and John Muir
The Science of Awe

- Psychologists who describe “awe”
  Sigmund Freud, Abraham Maslow, Viktor Frankl
- First scientific paper on awe 2003 by Keltner
- 15 scientific papers in 2018
Cultivating Awe From:
(Jonah Paquette, 2020)

1. The present moment
2. Nature
3. Vastness
4. Mind-bending
5. Courage and inspiration
6. Timelessness
7. Gratitude
8. Habit
9. Social connection
10. Creativity and the arts
11. A compassionate and a connected life
1. Awe in the Present Moment

- The power of lingering
- Slow down
- Unplug
2. Awe from Nature

- Forest bathing
- Awe from mountains
- Animals in their natural habitat
- The clouds above
3. Awe from Vastness

- The earth from space
- The stars above
- Reflect on something vast
4. Mind-Bending Awe

- Finding the extraordinary in the ordinary
- Learn awe-inspiring facts
- The human brain
5. Awe from Courage and Inspiration

- Awe of genius
- Witness greatness
- Awe from leadership
- Awe from compassion
6. Awe from Timelessness

- A moment in time
- The passing of seasons
- Geologic time
- Timeless footsteps
7. Awe from Gratitude

- Awe of our bodies
- The goodness of others
- Awe for life’s gifts
8. Awe through Habit

- Relive moments of awe
- Take the scenic route
- Capture moments of awe
- Stretch your comfort zone
- Seek out small adventures
9. Awe through Social Connection

- Seeing awe in others
- Through the eyes of a child
- Sharing stories of awe
10. Awe from Creativity and the Arts

- Appreciate the arts
- Awe through music
- Awe-inspiring architecture
- Be creative
11. Awe Through a Compassionate and Connected Life

- Shifts our perspective on time
- Reignites our awareness of precious moments
Challenges to Awe

- Technology
- Urban living
- Stress
- Worry
Research Related to Awe

- Rudd (2012) Awe increases generosity/life satisfaction
- Piff (2015) Awe makes us more compassionate
- Joye (2015) Enhances positive emotions
- Prade (2016) Awe increases generosity
More Research on Awe

- Smith (2016) Awe makes us more curious
- Bai (2017) Awe connects us, “the small self”
- Stellar (2017) Awe results in lasting mood boosts
- Anderson (2018) Awe lowers stress
Seek out Small Adventures

- Awe through social connection
- See awe in others
- See things through the eyes of a child
- Share stories of awe
- Join the crowd
Children and Laughter

- Children laugh approximately 300 times per day (Urban Legend)
Adults and Laughter

- Adults laugh 17 times per day (Urban legend)
Godelieve Smulders - Dutch Artist
Norman Cousins- Anatomy of An Illness

- Norman Cousins- New York Post Editor
- 1979-wrote Anatomy of an Illness
- Used laughter to help him recover from an ill-defined disorder
- The book was a “smash hit”
- The notion that persists today, and not just in clichés (“laughter is the best medicine”)
A physician from Mumbai, India

1995 Launched the first Laughter Club

Laughter Yoga Clubs are fast growing worldwide

YouTube Videos
Steve Wilson- World Laughter Tour

Has “westernized” interpretations of “eastern” traditions

March 2005: Certified Laughter Leader (CLL) training program became approved for continuing education numerous medical professions

2021: More than 7,000 Certified Laughter Leaders in the USA
Benefits of Laughter

- Combats Respiratory Infections
- Reduces Pain
- Relaxes Muscles
- Positive Mental Function

- Changes perspective with improved mood
- Helps the Body Fight Infection
- Improves Tissue Function & Growth
- Happiness Linked to Longevity
The Science of Laughter
Our Bodies. Our Minds. Our Souls.
(October, 2018)
Evidence of the Benefits of Laughter (Berk, 2018)

- Helps the brain regulate the stress hormones (cortisol and epinephrine)
- Link between laughter and the production of antibodies and endorphins, the body's natural pain-killers
Evidence for the Benefits of Laughter
(Robert Provine, 1989)

- 30 times more likely to laugh in social situations
- Laughter has a behaviorally contagious effect
- More likely to catch laughter off somebody else if you know them
Sample Laughter Exercises

- Milk Shake
- New York Subway
- Airplane safety drill
- Ants in your pants
- Appreciation laugh
- Automobile laughter
- Barefoot on hot sand
- Peace Laughter
- Penguin laughter
- Bow and Arrow
- Cell Phone
- Cocktail Party
- Double Handshake
- Gotta-go
- Hawaiian Greeting
- Roller coaster
- Silent Laughter
- High five- near miss
- Hokey Pokey
- Hug the World
- Humming Laughter
- Ice cube down back
- Lawnmower
- Unity Laughter
- Stadium Wave
LET’S TRY IT OUT!