

Wellness Rx

Your prescription for a healthier lifestyle.

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Introducing A New Wellness Model:

In the continuing quest to provide comprehensive wellness education we present you with a new model of wellness. This wheel encompasses 8 dimensions working simultaneously for optimum health. Wellness is much more than merely physical health, exercise or nutrition. It is the full integration of states of physical, mental, and spiritual well-being. The model used by our campus includes social, emotional, spiritual, environmental, occupational, intellectual, multicultural and physical wellness. Each of these eight dimensions act and interact in a way that contributes to our own quality of life.

Social Wellness is the ability to relate to and connect with other people in our world. Our ability to establish and maintain positive relationships with family, friends and co-workers contributes to our Social Wellness.

Emotional Wellness is the ability to understand ourselves and cope with the challenges life can bring. The ability to acknowledge and share feelings of anger, fear, sadness or stress; hope, love, joy and happiness in a productive manner contributes to our Emotional Wellness.

Spiritual Wellness is the ability to establish peace and harmony in our lives. The ability to develop congruency between values and actions and to realize a common purpose that binds creation together contributes to our Spiritual Wellness.

Environmental Wellness is the ability to recognize our own responsibility for the quality of the air, the water and the land that surrounds us. The ability to make a positive impact on the quality of our environment, be it our homes, our communities or our planet contributes to our Environmental Wellness.

Occupational Wellness is the ability to get personal fulfillment from our jobs (or school) or our chosen career fields while still maintaining balance in our lives. Our desire to contribute in our

careers to make a positive impact on the organizations we work in and to society as a whole leads to Occupational Wellness.

Intellectual Wellness is the ability to open our minds to new ideas and experiences that can be applied to personal decisions, group interaction and community betterment. The desire to learn new concepts, improve skills and seek challenges in pursuit of lifelong learning contributes to our Intellectual Wellness.

Multicultural Wellness is understanding and appreciating cultures other than your own to help you to understand yourself better. Learning about other ways of being puts your own vantage point in a global perspective, and can open new pathways of seeing the world. In today's global business world, being educated about and appreciative of cultures other than your own are invaluable skills.

Physical Wellness is the ability to maintain a healthy quality of life that allows us to get through our daily activities without undue fatigue or physical stress. The ability to recognize that our behaviors have a significant impact on our wellness and adopting healthful habits (routine check ups, a balanced diet, exercise, etc.) while avoiding destructive habits (tobacco, drugs, alcohol, etc.) will lead to optimal Physical Wellness.



Dear Emerson Students,

Do you ever get the feeling that life is moving so fast you forgot to breathe (or eat and sleep)? Perhaps it's worth focusing for a minute on achieving balance in body, mind and spirit. You know you need to take care of your physical health, but have you been doing enough to maintain a healthy emotional balance?

October is emotional wellness month and my wish is that you find time to laugh, enjoy and balance your activities to support your emotional state. Stress often begins in *how you think*. And how you think determines how you feel—both emotionally and sometimes physically. But being emotionally well is more than just handling stress. It also involves being attentive to your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, whether positive or negative.

So get outside, take a moment to breathe and remember the things we worry about often never happen and often are not as bad as we originally assumed.

Be Well,
Deborah Engler
Coordinator of Wellness Education
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What is Emotional Wellness?

Emotional wellness implies the ability to...

- Be aware of and accept our feelings, rather than deny them
- Have an optimistic approach to life
- Express feelings freely and manage feelings effectively.
- Adjust to change
- Cope with stress in a healthy way
- Enjoy life despite its occasional disappointments and frustrations

The Path To Emotional Wellness

The path to emotional wellness may involve:

- Awareness of thoughts and feelings
- Using a positive attitude
- Seeking support and expressing emotions in a suitable manner
- Learning time management skills
- Setting Priorities
- Accepting mistakes and learning from them
- Maintaining Life Balance

The path may also involve seeking out support from a mental health professional when needed and gathering information in order to make informed value decisions.



Are You Engaged in the Process of Emotional Wellness?

Evaluate your own emotional wellness with this brief quiz.

- 1. Am I able to maintain a balance of work, family, friends, and other obligations?
- 2. Do I have ways to reduce stress in my life?
- 3. Am I able to make decisions with a minimum of stress and worry?
- 4. Am I able to set priorities?

If you answered "No" to any of the questions, it may indicate an area where you need to improve the state of your emotional wellness. If you want guidance, the Center for Health and Wellness and Counseling Center are great places to start!

The Ten Tools

These proven tools can help you feel stronger and more hopeful:

1. Connect with others
2. Stay positive
3. Get physically active
4. Help others
5. Get enough sleep
6. Create joy and satisfaction
7. Eat well
8. Take care of your spirit
9. Deal better with hard times
10. Get professional help if you need it

CHW Announcements

- As flu season is fast upon us, please check out the information on the health center webpage (www.emerson.edu/health_center). Here you'll find updates on flu vaccinations and ways to stay health this season.
- We are excited to offer expanded hours at the CHW! Now you can book same day urgent appointments on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings from 5-8 pm.
- There are two new faces at the CHW: Stephen Vinitisky, NP and Laura Owen, Clinical Coordinator. Please helps us welcome them to Emerson College!

The HOPE Corner

You might be wondering what Hope is and how it relates to you. Well, Hope is a group of students who believe that being healthy is about the small things we can do everyday like: wear condoms if you choose to have sex, eat nutritious, walk or bike, practice yoga or take a nature hike. Hope's mission is to find creative ways to make being well accessible to Emerson students.

Meetings are on Tuesday's at 7 pm at 216 Tremont (on the 5th floor). Lend your energy to our current projects including: "Sex On The Table: Shopping for Safe Sex", the first ever Emerson College Recipe Book and outings to T accessible hiking. Look for us on Facebook or contact the president, Catie Colliton at hope.emersoncollege@gmail.com for more information.

Being Mindful of Our Bodies

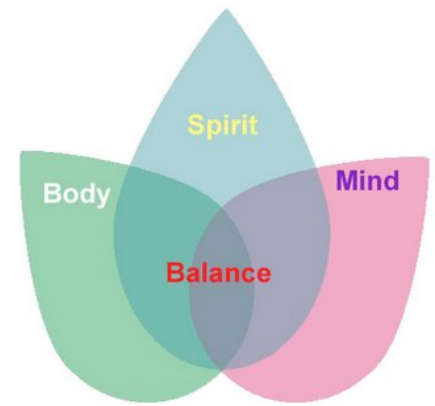
It is a marvel that in the last two decades we've learned so much about health and well-being. The average 20 year old knows more about exercise, diet, psychology, supplements and pharmaceuticals than ever before in history. Why, then, is there such an obvious disconnect? *We're more obese, sedentary and stressed out now than ever before.* Perhaps the most obvious explanation for the gap between what you know and how that translates into taking care of your health, is your emotional state.

Depression and anxiety can have a profound effect on physiology and health. What researchers are now documenting is a rich and intricate multidirectional communication system linking the brain, the mind and the immune system, and potentially all other systems of the body from the heart, to the lungs, to the skin. This is the pathway through which our emotions and our hopes, fears and beliefs can affect the body's ability to defend itself and to function optimally in response the continually changing moment-by-moment demands of life.

Life is full of changes. It's whether we can cope with those changes or not that determines whether we will be overcome by the situation. So what are the factors of a stress hardy personality? They are the three C's: **commitment, control and challenge.**

- *Commitment* is our capacity to engage meaningfully with the newness and be involved with the tasks and relationships.
- *Control* is the tendency to think and feel we can influence events, coupled with the willingness to act rather than be a victim of circumstances.
- *Challenge* is the belief that change is the essence of life, rather than maintenance of the status quo.

So the question for you is, do you have a stress hardy personality?



How Stress Hurts



Evolution was pretty savvy about danger. See a saber-tooth tiger, get moving!

Today, flight—or fight, if necessary—still triggers major bodily changes, such as:

- Sugars in the bloodstream increase to supply energy
- Muscles tense so they're poised for action

- Heart beats faster to get blood pumping
- Digestion and other functions slow to save energy needed elsewhere

The problem is that our brains react to ominous loads of laundry and upcoming dentist visits like they were vicious predators. And the onslaught of today's stressors is fairly nonstop. When our bodies stay triggered for too long, lots of possible health problems can develop or worsen. Stress also can lead to serious mental health problems, like depression and anxiety disorders.

Of course, you can't necessarily remove the sources of stress. The good news is that regardless of what causes illness, learning to use your mind wisely can improve your health, reduce your stress, and help you become a happier and more compassionate person!

Alcohol And Depression

Alcohol has been found to lower serotonin and norepinephrine levels, two vital hormones related to mood. As many are aware, alcohol is a depressant so people with depression are susceptible to larger swings in mood. However, there is an obvious mood reward, or none of us would partake. This is because alcohol temporarily blunts the effects of stress hormones, especially when consumed in lower quantity. But then, in both larger amounts and several hours later, alcohol typically leaves you feeling worse than ever because it depresses the brain and nervous system. ***To lower your risk of these unpleasant after effects, as well as, stay safe, keep your B.A.C. below .08. This generally means no more than 1-2 drinks per hour (over a 3 hour time period).***

In addition to the hormonal effects of intoxication, stress, and drugs such as alcohol or cocaine, can activate a gene that is linked to depression and other mental problems. This is one of the many genetic links that makes some people more prone to addiction than another. The result can give rise to seizures, depression, manic-depressive episodes and a host of mental issues. Alcohol also lowers your immune response, making warding off illnesses more difficult.

If you are curious about drinking but not sure about its effects on your body and emotions, consider visiting www.hadenough.org (About Binge Drinking) or contact Deborah Engler at the Center for Health and Wellness.

Foods And Mood

Energize your diet during the fall

By: Robyn Kievit, RD/LD, FNP-BC

Eating and supplementing wisely as the weather gets cooler for our mood and energy level is just as important as in warmer months. In addition, maintaining an appropriate fluid balance and preserving a regular exercise regime intact also helps do the trick!

Antioxidants are of primary importance for providing more energy. Antioxidants are vitamins and minerals such as vitamins C and E, selenium, zinc and carotenoids. Antioxidants provide energy on a daily basis and help protect the body from cancer and heart disease.

Fresh foods high in vitamin C and carotenoids that are available on campus and when shopping off campus are: baby corn, artichoke hearts, heart of palm, beets, tomato products, orange juice, broccoli, and carrots and fruits canned in their own juices. When shopping off campus these can be found as canned or frozen and are also less expensive with a longer shelf and or freezer life (3 months from date of purchase for frozen; check dates on cans).

Selenium is found in lean meats, seafood, skinless chicken and in whole grain breads and cereals. Obtaining selenium in its food form is the best choice, as supplementing is not recommended. Zinc is in adequate supply in most diets, but it is found in higher amounts in oysters, extra lean meats, turkey and whole grain breads and cereals. Zinc also has a reputation for being a natural aphrodisiac and which may help us find extra energy and excitement as the weather turns colder.

The role of phytochemicals and flavenoids are also seen as sources of foods with high energy that can improve one's mood and energy level. Phytochemicals are naturally occurring compounds found in fruits, vegetables, grains, seeds and legumes. These compounds protect the body from detrimental effects of the environment, but the mechanism of action is not fully understood. Flavenoids are a type of phytochemical found in abundance in fruits, vegetables, green tea and curry powder. Flavenoids are also known to stimulate the immune system.



Smoking And Depression

By Elaine Arnold, ANP-BC, Nurse Practitioner



Do you get frustrated with your attempts to quit smoking? Have you ever considered your emotional wellness as a barrier? Smoking is not just a physical addiction or reinforced habit. Smoking affects our mood. According to Diane Burgermeister in *The Journal for Nurse Practitioners*, "Nicotine-dependent smokers are twice as likely to experience major depression compared to nondependent smokers and non-smokers." The main symptoms of dependence are tolerance and withdrawal. Tolerance is the need for higher and higher levels to obtain the desired effect. It occurs because nicotine is quickly metabolized and has a short half-life. Withdrawal, when a nicotine-dependent person tries to quit, brings undesired symptoms such as irritability, anxiety, restlessness and difficulty concentrating. Chemical changes during cigarette smoking contribute to increasing mood and it is suggested that this can account for the use of smoking to self-medicate a depressed mood. It also accounts for why it's so hard to quit when feeling anxious or down.

Stressful events are known triggers for depression, especially if one is already susceptible to mood swings. Despite its immediate stress releasing reward, nicotine can actually *inhibit* serotonin, a chemical released in the brain and elsewhere in the body that affects mood. Less serotonin means increased sadness, anxiety or lethargy. As opposed to a "passing" feeling when stressful events pile up, a person who smokes may find themselves in a major depressive episode. It is a frustrating cycle. So, if you are considering quitting, take an assessment of your mood too. If you are considering quitting or want to contact a clinician at The Center for Health and Wellness, call 617-824-8666.