

The Wellness Lifestyle Workbook

Self-Assessments, Exercises & Educational Handouts



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Using This Book *(For the professional)*

Wellness and health are interrelated, but distinct concepts. Health is considered freedom from disease; it is the condition in which people are able to do their most constructive work, provide the best possible service to the world, and experience the highest possible enjoyment in leisure-time experiences. *Wellness*, on the other hand, is much more complex than basic physical health. *Wellness* is the ability to fully integrate physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual well-being into an effective lifestyle. Optimum wellness balances the following five basic dimensions:

Physical Dimension – This dimension is related to sound nutritional practices, maintaining proper weight, participating in regular exercise, getting enough sleep, engaging in physical activity, avoiding risky behavior, and restricting intake of harmful substances.

Career Dimension – This dimension is related to finding balance among various life roles as people engage in fulfilling work and related activities, and identifying leisure activities that will provide a sense of life satisfaction.

Emotional Dimension – This dimension is related to understanding personal feelings, maintaining a relatively even emotional state, accepting one's own limitations, expressing emotions effectively, adjusting to change, and maintaining good, healthy relationships with other people.

Social Dimension – This dimension is related to sharing friendships, family relationships and group memberships. It entails using empathy and active listening skills, caring genuinely about other people, being open to caring from other people, and committing to the common good of the community, nation, and world.

Spiritual Dimension – This dimension is related to maintaining a sense that life is meaningful, employing a continuing quest for value and purpose, searching for clarity, committing to peace and contentment in life, and developing the fortitude to continue in the face of obstacles.

A wellness lifestyle pervades all aspects of a person's life independent and with others in school, work, leisure, community activities and in a group. A wellness lifestyle helps to minimize stress and promote well-being and self-fulfillment. The notion of wellness suggests that people are whole beings, not fragmented parts that can be dealt with separately. Wellness stresses conscious effort and commitment to one's ability to resist disease and maintain optimum health.

(Continued)

Using This Book *(For the professional, continued)*

The Wellness Lifestyle Workbook contains five separate sections and a bonus section to help participants learn more about themselves and their lifestyles. They will learn about a wellness lifestyle that promotes health and well-being.

The sections of this book are:

- 1) COPING WITH STRESS SCALE** helps individuals identify their basic style for dealing with stress.
 - 2) PHYSICAL FITNESS SCALE** helps individuals identify if they are eating well, getting plenty of relaxation sleep and exercising regularly in order to be able to cope effectively with stress.
 - 3) CREATIVE LEISURE SCALE** helps individuals explore their leisure interests and creative ways of implementing these interests in productive activities.
 - 4) HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS SCALE** helps individuals determine whether they have developed a healthy intimate relationship with their partners and productive relationships with family members.
 - 5) SPIRITUAL WELLNESS SCALE** helps individuals explore how spiritually well they currently are.
- BONUS — LIFE SKILLS SCALE** helps individuals identify major strengths and weaknesses in the life skills they possess.

These sections serve as avenues for individual self-reflection, as well as for group experiences revolving around identified topics of importance. Each assessment includes directions for easy administration, scoring and interpretation. Each section includes exploratory activities, reflective journaling activities and educational handouts to help participants discover their habitual effective and ineffective methods of managing health and wellness and exploring new ways to bring about healing.

The art of self-reflection goes back many centuries and is rooted in many of the world's greatest spiritual and philosophical traditions. Socrates, the ancient Greek philosopher, was known to walk the streets engaging the people he met in philosophical reflection and dialogue. He felt that this type of activity was so important in life that he went so far as to proclaim, "The unexamined life is not worth living!" The unexamined life is one in which the same routine is continually repeated without ever thinking about its meaning to one's life and how this life really could be lived. However, a structured reflection and examination of beliefs, assumptions, characteristics, and patterns can provide a better understanding, which can lead to a more satisfying life. A greater level of self-understanding about important life skills is often necessary to make positive, self-directed changes in the negative patterns that keep repeating. The assessments and exercises in this book can help promote this

Using This Book *(For the professional, continued)*

self-understanding. Through involvement in the in-depth activities, the participant claims ownership in the development of positive patterns.

Journaling is an extremely powerful tool for enhancing self-discovery, learning, transcending traditional problems, breaking ineffective life habits, and helping to heal from psychological traumas of the past. From a physical point of view, writing reduces stress and lowers muscle tension, blood pressure and heart rate levels. Psychologically, writing reduces sadness, depression and general anxiety, and leads to a greater level of life satisfaction and optimism. Behaviorally, writing leads to enhanced social skills, emotional intelligence and creativity. It also leads to improved writing skills which leads to more self-confidence in the workplace.

By combining reflective assessment and journaling, participants will be exposed to a powerful method of combining verbalizing and writing to reflect on and solve problems. Participants will become more aware of health and wellness issues in their lives.

Preparation for using the assessments and activities in this book is important. The authors suggest that prior to administering any of the assessments in this book, you complete them yourself. This will familiarize you with the format of the assessments, the scoring directions, the interpretation guides and the journaling activities. Although the assessments are designed to be self-administered, scored and interpreted. This familiarity will help prepare facilitators to answer questions about the assessments for participants.

The Assessments, Journaling Activities and Educational Handouts

The Assessments, Journaling Activities, and Educational Handouts in *The Wellness Lifestyle Workbook* are reproducible and ready to be photocopied for participants' use. Assessments contained in this book focus on self-reported data and are similar to ones used by psychologists, counselors, therapists and career consultants. Accuracy and usefulness of the information provided is dependent on the truthful information that each participant provides through self-examination. By being honest, participants help themselves to learn about unproductive and ineffective patterns, and to uncover information that might be keeping them from being as happy and/or as successful as they might be.

An assessment instrument can provide participants with valuable information about themselves; however, it cannot measure or identify everything about them. The purposes of the assessments are not to pigeon-hole certain characteristics, but rather to allow participants to explore all of their characteristics. This book contains self-assessments, not tests. Tests measure knowledge or whether something is right or wrong. For the assessments in this book, there are no right or wrong answers. These assessments ask for personal opinions or attitudes about a topic of importance in the participant's career and life.

When administering assessments in this workbook, remember that the items are generically written so that they will be applicable to a wide variety of people but will not account for every possible variable for every person. The assessments are not specifically tailored to one person. Use them to help participants identify possible negative themes in their lives and find ways to break the hold that these patterns and their effects have.

Advise the participants taking the assessments that they should not spend too much time trying to analyze the content of the questions; their initial response will most likely be true. Regardless of individual scores, encourage participants to talk about their findings and their feelings pertaining to what they have discovered about themselves. Talking about health, wellness, and overall well-being can enhance the life of participants. These wellness exercises can be used by group facilitators working with any populations who want to strengthen their overall wellness.

A particular score on any assessment does not guarantee a participant's level of health or wellness. Use discretion when using any of the information or feedback provided in this workbook. The use of these assessments should not be substituted for consultation and/or wellness planning with a health care professional.

***Thanks to the following professionals whose input in this book
has been so valuable!***

Kathy Khalsa, OTR/L
Kathy Liptak, Ed.D.

Eileen Regen, M.Ed., CJE
Lucy Ritzic, OTR/L

Layout of the Book

This book includes:

- **Assessment Instruments** – Self-assessment inventories with scoring directions and interpretation materials. Group facilitators can choose one or more of the activities relevant to their participants.
- **Activity Handouts** – Practical questions and activities that prompt self-reflection and promote self-understanding. These questions and activities foster introspection and promote pro-social behaviors.
- **Reflective Questions for Journaling** – Self-exploration activities and journaling exercises specific to each assessment to enhance self-discovery, learning and healing.
- **Educational Handouts** – Handouts designed to enhance instruction can be used individually or in groups. They can be distributed, converted into masters for overheads or transparencies, or written down on a board and discussed.

Who should use this program?

This book has been designed as a practical tool for helping professional therapists, counselors, psychologists, teachers, group leaders, etc. Depending on the role of the professional using *The Wellness Lifestyle Workbook* and the specific group's needs, these sections can be used individually, combined, or implemented as part of an integrated curriculum for a more comprehensive approach.

Why use self-assessments?

Self-assessments are important in teaching various health and wellness skills.

Participants will:

- Become aware of the primary motivators that guide their behavior.
- Explore and learn to identify potentially harmful situations.
- Explore the effects of messages received in childhood.
- Gain insight that will guide behavioral change.
- Focus thinking on behavioral goals for change.
- Uncover resources they possess that can help to cope with problems and difficulties.
- Explore personal characteristics without judgment.
- Develop full awareness of personal strengths and weaknesses.

Because the assessments are presented in a straightforward and easy-to-use format, individuals can self-administer, score, and interpret each assessment independently.

Introduction for the Participant

Wellness practitioners and researchers believe that your health lies on a continuum and is an ever-changing balance between your physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual dimensions. Jesse Williams, one of the pioneers of the health education movement, suggested that health as freedom from disease was not a sufficient description, and that health should be seen as a quality of life and a standard of inspiration and increasing achievements, as well as the energy to do the things one cares about. *

Wellness combines your physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual health into a quality way of life. Wellness is the ability to live your life to the fullest, have zest for life, experience joy in all you do, and maximize your full potential. As you can see, wellness includes much more than just your physical health.

Most people are not proactive in their approach to wellness; they simply wait for disease to strike them, then they consult a physician to treat the disease and the symptoms. People who subscribe to the notion of wellness, on the other hand, take responsibility for their health and are continually learning about themselves and making the changes that will enhance their state of wellness. Now is the time for you to take charge of your life and make changes (sometimes drastic changes) that will make you healthier, prevent disease, and enhance your overall wellness. This book, *The Wellness Lifestyle Workbook*, is designed to help you learn more about yourself, discover how to balance all of your health dimensions, and improve your overall feeling of wellness and well-being.

**Williams, J. F. (1964). The Administration of Health Education & Physical Education. St. Louis, MO: W.B. Saunders / Elsevier.*

The Wellness Lifestyle Workbook

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SECTION I:

Coping with Stress Scale



Name _____

Date _____



Coping with Stress Scale Directions

Coping has been described as the efforts you use to manage specific internal and external stressors that tax your resources. Thus, coping is an ongoing process, and your repeated pattern of coping becomes your coping style.

People use many different strategies to cope with stress. All of the strategies have advantages and disadvantages. This assessment is designed to help you understand your approach to coping with stress in your life.

It contains 28 statements divided into four coping styles. Read each of the statements and decide whether or not the statement describes you. If the statement describes you, circle the **YES** next to the statement. If it does not describe you, circle the **NO** next to the statement.

In the following example, the circled **NO** indicates the statement is not descriptive of the person completing the inventory.

I take whatever actions I can to eliminate the stressor

YES

NO

This is not a test and there are no right or wrong answers. Do not spend too much time thinking about your answers. Your initial response will likely be the most true for you. Be sure to respond to every statement.

(Turn to the next page and begin)

Coping with Stress Scale

When coping with a current stressor in my life . . .

SECTION I

I take whatever actions I can to eliminate the stressor	YES	NO
I do what has to be done, in a logical manner	YES	NO
I develop a strategy about what to do	YES	NO
I put aside other things and concentrate on the stressor	YES	NO
I don't allow myself to be distracted in dealing with the stressor	YES	NO
I seek to change the stressful situation	YES	NO
I change the physical stressor in the environment	YES	NO

TOTAL = _____

SECTION II

I work out	YES	NO
I use muscle relaxation techniques	YES	NO
I avoid using drugs, alcohol or stimulants to make myself feel better	YES	NO
I do deep breathing techniques	YES	NO
I continue to engage in healthy leisure activities	YES	NO
I organize my time effectively	YES	NO
I find entertainment to get my mind off the stressor	YES	NO

TOTAL = _____

(Continued on the next page)



(Coping with Stress Scale, continued)

When coping with a current stressor in my life . . .

SECTION III

I find comfort in my spirituality	YES	NO
I get advice from people I trust	YES	NO
I talk to others to find out more about the situation	YES	NO
I use all of my available support systems	YES	NO
I communicate with trusted others about my feelings	YES	NO
I seek out people who have had similar experiences	YES	NO
I express my feelings in a socially acceptable manner	YES	NO

TOTAL = _____

SECTION IV

I attempt to focus on the positive side of the situation	YES	NO
I try to alter my irrational thinking	YES	NO
I try to turn the situation into an opportunity	YES	NO
I remind myself that the situation is temporary	YES	NO
I look for different ways to interpret the situation	YES	NO
I notice how my thinking is influencing the stress	YES	NO
I try to stop thinking about it so much	YES	NO

TOTAL = _____

(Go to the Scoring Directions on the next page)

Coping with Stress Scale Scoring Directions

This assessment is designed to measure your approach to coping with stress. Count the number of YES answers you circled in each section on the previous pages. Put that total on the line marked "Total" at the end of each section.

Then, transfer your totals to the spaces below:

SECTION I "TOTAL" = _____ (Behavioral)

SECTION II "TOTAL" = _____ (Physical)

SECTION III "TOTAL" = _____ (Emotional)

SECTION IV "TOTAL" = _____ (Cognitive)

To be effective in coping with stress, you will probably use all four of the coping styles. The area or areas in which you scored the highest tend to be your most preferred coping style. Similarly, the area or areas in which you scored the lowest tend to be your least preferred coping style. Remember that the people who are most effective in coping with stress are able to effectively use all four styles well. Learning techniques from all four styles will help you deal with stressful situations. Notice your score for each of the sections and complete the activity handouts to better integrate techniques from each of the four styles in your life.



Coping with Stress Scale

Profile Interpretation — Behavioral Coping Style

SCALE I — A BEHAVIORAL coping style is one in which you take action to eliminate the problems associated with the stressor in your environment. If you use this style you will develop an action strategy and concentrate on using the strategy to eliminate the stressor. You will seek out the stressor in your environment and make appropriate changes to eliminate the stressor.

List a time when this coping style has worked well for you.

List a time when this coping style has not worked well for you.

Why did it work sometimes and other times did not? What was the difference?

(Continued on the next page)