

# Spiritual Wellness

The spiritual dimension of wellness involves seeking meaning and purpose in human existence. It includes the development of a deep appreciation for the depth and expanse of life and natural forces that exist in the universe.

As you begin to develop the spiritual wellness dimension of your life, taking the Wellness path, spiritually, you'll start asking the question, who am I and what is meaningful in my life. You'll observe the scenery along the path, the world around you with appreciation and wonderment. You'll ask many questions about the scenery, the world, as well as your everyday experiences, and learn to value that which cannot be completely understood. Growing spiritually, you'll try to find peaceful harmony between internal personal feelings and emotions and the rough and rugged stretches of your path.

While traveling the path, you may experience many feelings of doubt, despair, fear, disappointment and dislocation as well as feelings of pleasure, joy, happiness and discovery—these are all important experiences and components of the terrain, your value system. You'll know you're becoming spiritually well when your actions become more consistent with your beliefs and values.

On this excursion, you'll continually think about and integrate your experiences and beliefs with the experiences and beliefs of those around you. With this valuable spiritual wellness information, you'll be able to engage in the formulation of your world view, and your system of values and goals.

- As you travel the wellness path, you'll begin to believe that - spiritually.
- It's better to ponder the meaning of life for ourselves and to be tolerant of the beliefs of others than to close our minds and become intolerant.
- It's better to live each day in a way that is consistent with our values and beliefs than to do otherwise and feel untrue to ourselves.

## Steps to Encourage Spiritual Wellness

Spiritual wellness is the process of getting in touch with your spiritual core. It is a dedication that is unique for each individual. This process can vary from attending church to practicing meditation, or both. It is the process of looking within to become more in touch with the spiritual dimensions of your life.

- **Explore your spiritual core** — Ask yourself the big questions: Who am I? Why did I come here? Why do humans/the world exist? Why is there evil? What happens after death?
- **Be quiet** — Spend time alone and meditate regularly. Meditation is the process of being fully here, with all concentration focused on the now. By living in the present and letting go of the past and not worrying about the future, we can achieve the inner peace that we strive for while practicing meditation. There are many forms of meditation; find out which one is right for you.
- **Be inquisitive and curious** — An attitude of active searching increases your options and your potential for spiritual centering. Don't shut doors before you check out what's behind them.

- **Be receptive to grief and pain** — Pain is a deepener. Allow yourself to feel the pain fully, then ask what it's trying to teach you.
- **Be and Do** — Spirituality is about more than reading; it's about "doing" and being fully in the present moment in everything you do.
- **Witness the choices you make in each moment** — Bring them into consciousness; ask yourself what the consequences of a choice are and if the choice will bring fulfillment and happiness. Listen with the heart and be guided by messages of comfort and discomfort. If there is comfort, go for it! If there is discomfort, pause and reevaluate.
- **Practice acceptance** — See that life right now is as it "should be." Do not struggle against the universe by struggling against the moment. Take responsibility for your life without blaming anyone, including yourself. See what the situation can teach you and how you can share this teaching with others.
- **Practice detachment** — Allow yourself and those around you the freedom to be who they are. Recognize uncertainty as an essential aspect of life. See that solutions come out of problems, confusion, and chaos, and that uncertainty is the path to freedom.
- **Be playful** — Spirituality is in music, art, dance, laughter, singing, and all of life.
- **Look for deeper meanings** — If you notice that certain themes keep coming up over and over in your life, rather than feeling like you have no control over the situation, ask for the deeper meaning of the pattern to come to you. See the gift in your greatest troubles/problems/challenges. The Chinese word for catastrophe is the same as their word for opportunity.
- **Take "seven breath" breaks** — Stop periodically throughout the day, close your eyes, and take seven deep, slow belly breaths (breathe in to the count of seven, breathe out to the count of seven, seven times). Then, open your eyes and see your new world.

## Spiritual Wellness Assessment

The spiritual dimension of wellness involves seeking meaning and purpose in one's life.

Read each statement carefully and respond honestly by using the following scoring:

**Almost always = 2 points**  
points

**Sometimes/occasionally = 1 point**

**Very seldom = 0**

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. I feel comfortable and at ease with my spiritual life.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. There is a direct relationship between my personal values and daily actions.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. When I get depressed or frustrated, my spiritual beliefs and values give me direction.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Prayer, meditation, and/or quiet personal reflection is/are important in my life.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Life is meaningful for me, and I feel a purpose in life.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. I am able to speak comfortably about my personal values and beliefs.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. I am consistently striving to grow spiritually and I see it as a lifelong process.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. I am tolerant of and try to learn about others' beliefs and values.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. I have a strong sense of life optimism and use my thoughts and attitudes in life-affirming ways.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. I appreciate the natural forces that exist in the universe.

\_\_\_\_\_ Total for Spiritual Wellness Dimension

Score: **15 to 20 Points** - Excellent strength in this dimension.

Score: **9 to 14 Points** - There is room for improvement. Look again at the items in which you scored 1 or 0. What changes can you make to improve your score?

Score: **0 to 8 Points** - This dimension needs a lot of work. Look again at this dimension and challenge yourself to begin making small steps toward growth here. Remember: The goal is balanced wellness.