



COLORADO LAWYER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Self-Assessment for Wellbeing

Wellness is a connection of paths: knowledge and action. ~ Joshua Welch.

Terms like wellness, fitness, well-being, quality of life, active, and healthy lifestyle have become buzzwords among the public, health care practitioners, and even legislators. There are reality TV shows that turn goals such as attaining sobriety and weight loss into competitions. Celebrities are followed by the press through their processes of recovery from addictions of every kind, and often become spokespersons for companies promoting different types of wellness. At the same time we are being bombarded with advertising for unhealthy food and technology that promote an inactive and distracted lifestyle. Most Americans succumb to the mixed messages by living chaotic, stress-filled days and sedentary evenings and/or weekends; often fluctuating between healthy and unhealthy choices. In the midst of such dichotomy, how can we find our own version of wellness?

Wellness is, first and foremost, subjective and individual. It is also multi-dimensional, including topics such as: occupational, emotional, spiritual, environmental, physical, social, intellectual, and mental. Cultivating a balanced approach to each dimension takes a dedication to our own well-being. Health and wellness are about making personal choices that enhance our experience of life. Rather than putting it off until tomorrow, which then becomes the next day and then the next, take a few minutes to quickly assess how satisfied you are with your own level of wellness in each of the dimensions below. Ready?

Occupational: Recognize your personal satisfaction and enrichment in your life through work. Remember your passion and interest in the law. What is your attitude about your work? Look for the aspects of your work that align with your personal values, interests, and beliefs. Remember why you became a lawyer. Look for inspiration in the acts and examples of your colleagues, judges, and those you work with on a daily basis. Feel gratitude for the opportunities available to you in the workplace rather than resentment.

Emotional: Examine your awareness of, and tolerance for, your feelings. What is your capacity to manage your feelings and to realistically assess your own limitations, autonomy, and ability to cope with stress? Do you allow yourself to experience and express a healthy range of emotions? Remember that all emotions are fluid. Remember the old adage “this too shall pass?” Allow yourself to be aware of and connect with your emotions, but also let them go and change rather than clinging to the negative experiences.

Spiritual: Where are you in your search for finding meaning and purpose in human existence? Do you have a deep appreciation for the depth and expanse of life in the universe?

Spiritual wellness has to do with finding peaceful harmony between your own feelings and emotions, and the rough patches of your life. How well do you handle the rough patches? Use resources such as meditation, prayer, mantras, and faith to sooth yourself during the tough times.

Environmental: Are you aware of the interaction between the environment, your community and yourself? Is your daily environment peaceful and clean? Are you contributing to the health of the environment by picking up after yourself and recycling? Is your home and office clutter free? What technology/media do you expose yourself to on a daily basis? Are you surrounded by a positive or negative environment? Our environment and the messages we absorb daily can directly affect our psychological and physical health. Examine your environment at home and at work. Be selective with what you see, read, and hear around you.

Physical: How well are you taking care of your body? Ultimately, you are the only one who is responsible for your physical health. Do you rest when your body tells you rest is needed? Do you move and exercise on a regular basis? Do you supply your body with the nutrition it needs? What are you waiting for? Get up and get moving! Check your diet; is it healthy? If not, make some changes!

Social: How are your interpersonal relationships? Are you communicating effectively and compassionately with your friends and family? Are you engaging in healthy, interdependent relationships with good boundaries? Or are you engaging in negative relationship habits such as isolating yourself or co-dependency? Take some time to really examine your relationships.

Intellectual: Wisdom comes from both knowledge and experience. Are you actively engaging your creative mind? Are you thinking the same thoughts every day, or doing something new with your brain? Every day, stretch and challenge your mind with curiosity, problem solving, humor, and topics that are different.

Mental: How is your psychological well-being? Have you been suffering from depression or anxiety lately? How is your level of self-esteem? Practice mental stability to avoid the roller coaster of “out of control moods.”

There are many aspects of our lives that impact our overall well-being. After examining the eight dimensions of wellness, think about small but meaningful changes you can make to improve your health and your life experience. Change can be intimidating because we believe that we don't have the time or resources to dedicate to the process. Even the idea of change can become a burden from that perspective. If, however, we approach change as author Jonathan Lockwood Huie suggests, we can “welcome change as a great adventure.” How dedicated are you are to your own well-being? Based on your results, start

by making small changes in your daily life to become more balanced in your overall wellness.

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