

6 Elements of Wellbeing

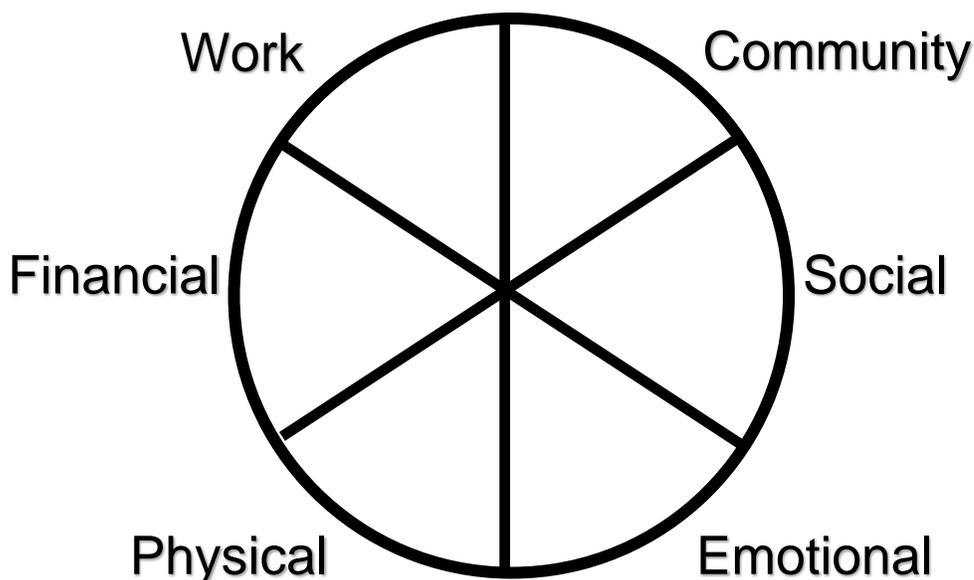
(Adapted from Kaiser Health Plans self-care materials)

Each of these elements are vital components of what being 'healthy' means, in all the areas individuals have needs. Our overall wellbeing is determined when we incorporate all the aspects of our whole person. Improving our whole life health means contributing to each area of our life, not exclusively bank accounts, blood pressure, or promotions. Similarly, **each area alone is not sufficient to provide for a healthy, meaningful overall life**, but each individual area can negatively impact our overall wellbeing, creating a domino effect decreasing our areas of strength and support.

It is important to maintain our areas of **strength**, perhaps even more so than simply identify our need to grow in different areas. Common instincts for problem solving lead people to identify all their "problems" first, and then their "strengths" second – this is counter to the idea that you need your Wellbeing to achieve your goals and solve problems in the first place. Further, actually experiencing greater satisfaction and joy with what is already going well in our lives helps us to feel better *now*, regardless of problems that also do exist, instead of focusing exclusively on our weaknesses.

There is no such thing as 'perfection' in this 'formula' for wellbeing – Holistic wellbeing requires a **balance**, in which each area is 'good enough', sufficient to meet your personal needs. There is no such thing as the 'best family life', 'best job', or 'most peaceful' person. These different areas of our lives are not achievable, that is, completed and then set aside. All 6 areas need our ongoing fostering and maintenance, both to avoid problems from dropping below our 'minimum' needs in each area - but more importantly so that we can genuinely appreciate, enjoy, and experience our healthiest selves in the different areas in which we live, within our unique circumstances.

Putting specific effort in these 6 areas –working on creating secure connections with others, having a healthy mind and body, being secure in their finance and career/activity choices, and being part of something bigger than themselves – creates a more stable and resourceful context for finding joy and meaning in our lives.



Activity	Internal Health	Relationships
<p>Work and Finances</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What Activity do you do in your day? How do you pay the Rent? Bills? Food? Most easily tracked, noticeable area of wellbeing 	<p>Physical and Emotional Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do you keep your body working? How do you keep it working well? How do you notice your feelings? What do you do that is satisfying? 	<p>Social Life and Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who is important to you? Who are your friends and family? Where do you fit in? Do you understand and fit with your social and cultural context?

Work/Activity Wellbeing: All people need some activity to maintain their wellbeing, even if mindless routine, but increasing meaningful, productive activity dramatically increases wellbeing. Inactivity, over activity, over-functioning, or work that is a poor fit to your skills and abilities are all common obstacles.

Financial Wellbeing: Financial security tends to be how adults maintain their basic needs – food, clothing, shelter, safety, etc. There are certain minimum financial needs people have, or they must meet these needs elsewhere (like support of strong family relationships or community/government assistance). Regardless of wealth, every person must manage their finances, know what they do and do not have, and make choices about how they use their assets that contribute to their wellbeing.

Physical Wellbeing: At its most basic, keeping the machine of your body running and fueled helps you accomplish things on a daily. More than that, experiencing physical satisfaction with exercise, activity, sexual activity, diet/food, and your various senses is an intimate part of overall wellbeing.

Emotional Wellbeing: Emotions are our internal cues and guides to our values and personality. What you feel says something about what you love, dislike, and find valuable or worthless. Everyone needs engagement with their all their emotions, even ones that are ‘unpleasant’. Activity and living without

Social Wellbeing: Every person requires 1:1 social contact, from family, friends, acquaintances, even strangers. At our most basic, we are social individuals who require interaction. People are designed to be social, and needs individual people we are close to, and have meaningful relationships with.

Community Wellbeing: Beyond individual interactions, people live in community, people with whom we have a shared interest, value, or benefit, even if we do not interact personally. This can be your neighborhood, religious community, cultural identity, or Health Insurance Provider, like Kaiser. We all receive practical benefit from these shared values, activities, and assets, and help create our identify with how we ‘fit’ into the world around us.

Let’s look at these 6 areas and ask yourself a few questions:

- How do I know when I am feeling well? Ex: If I am feeling healthy in [this area of my life], then it looks like.... Get a little bit specific.
- Which of these elements do you think is going best in your life right now?
- Which of these elements do you think is already growing but could improve more?
- Are any of these elements seriously lacking in your life at this time, something that could wreck wellbeing in other areas?

	I know I am doing well in this areas when I notice...	Warning signs I notice when I'm getting out of balance are...
Work and Daily Activity		
Financial Health and Management		
Physical Health		
Emotional Health		
Social Life		
Community Connection		

	Strengths I have in this area that I can draw on in need are...	Improvements I could make to improve my overall balance are...
Work and Daily Activity		
Financial Health and Management		
Physical Health		
Emotional Health		
Social Life		
Community Connection		