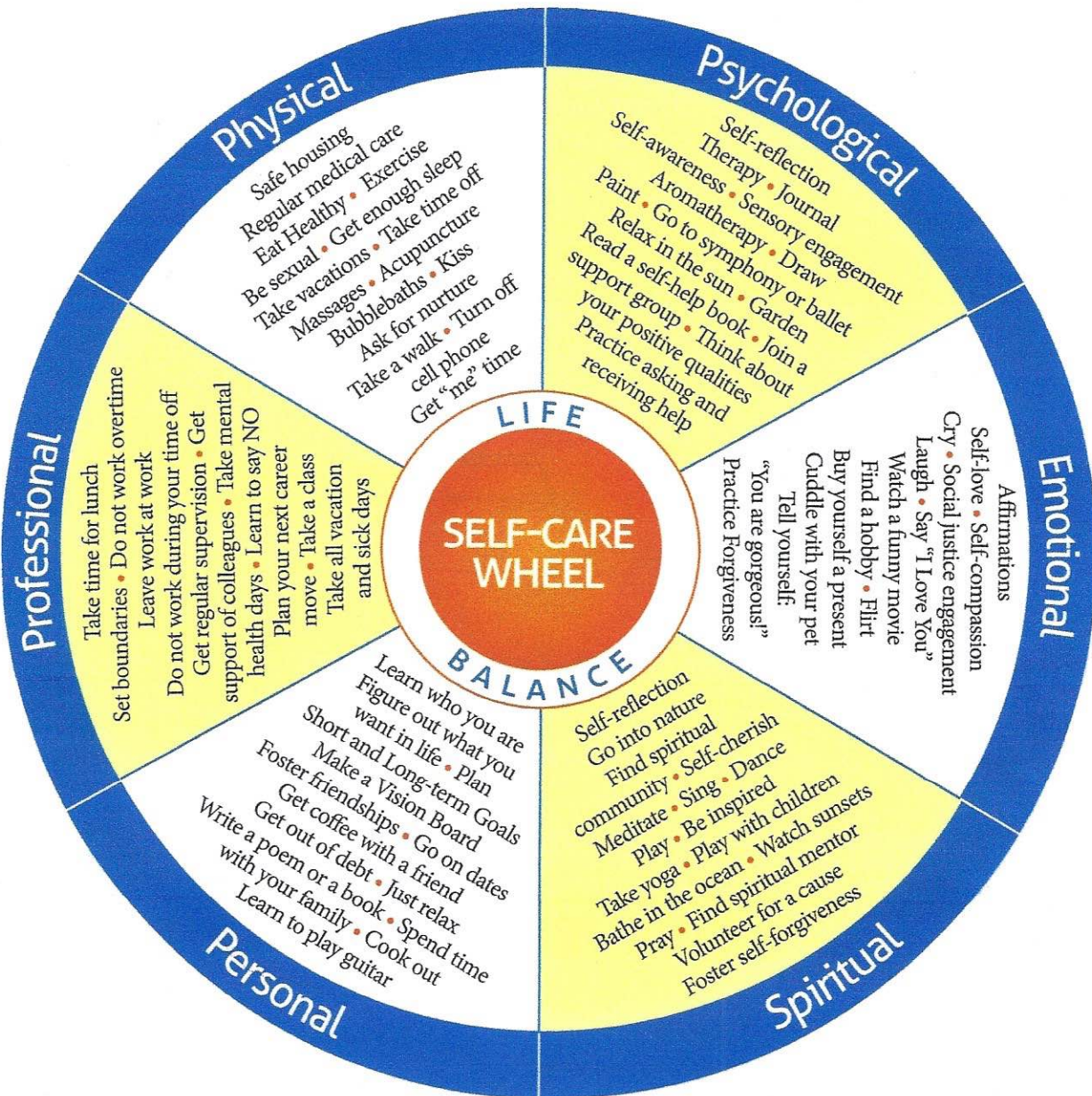


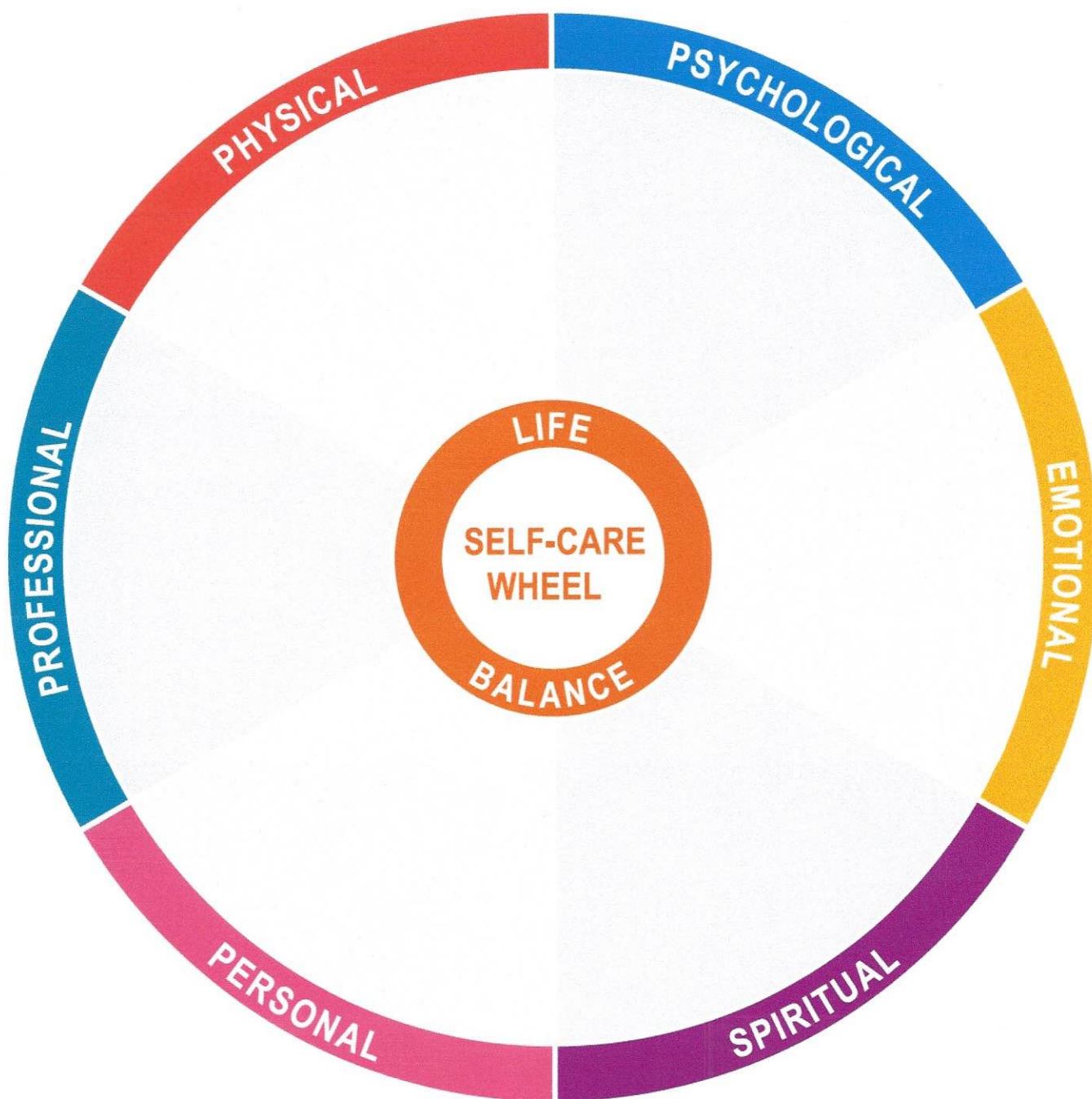
SELF-CARE WHEEL



This Self-Care Wheel was inspired by and adapted from "Self-Care Assessment Worksheet" from *Transforming the Pain: A Workbook on Vicarious Traumatization* by Saakvitne, Pearlman & Staff of TSI/CAAP (Norton, 1996). Created by Olga Phoenix Project: Healing for Social Change (2013).

Dedicated to all trauma professionals worldwide.

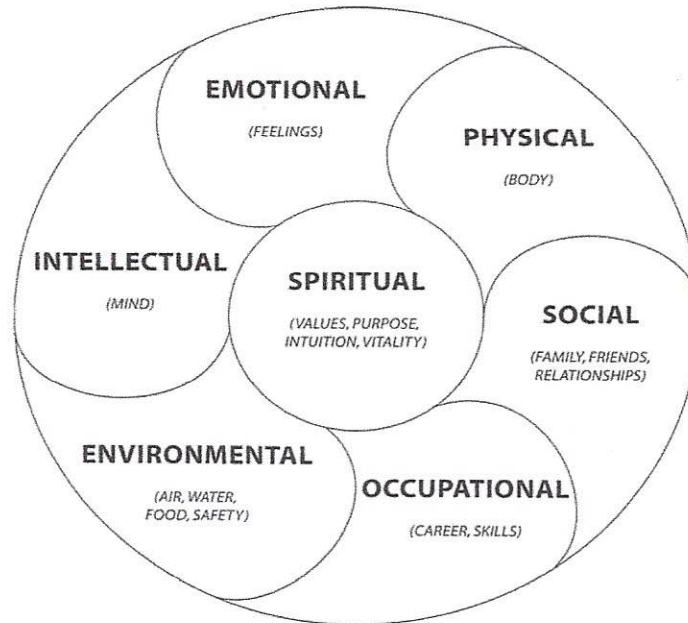
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Wellness Dimensions

Wellness is the pursuit of continued growth and balance in the seven dimensions of wellness. Many people think about "wellness" in terms of physical health only. The word invokes thoughts of nutrition, exercise, weight management, blood pressure, etc. Wellness, however, is much more than physical health. Wellness is a full integration of physical, mental, and spiritual well-being. It is a complex interaction that leads to quality of life.

Wellness is commonly viewed as having seven dimensions. Each dimension contributes to our own sense of wellness or quality of life, and each affects and overlaps the others. At times one may be more prominent than others, but neglect of any one dimension for any length of time has adverse effects on overall health.



Physical Dimension: Health experts believe that 40-70% of premature deaths in the U.S. could be prevented if Americans changed their personal habits and took better care of themselves. Watching what we eat, avoiding drugs and alcohol, wearing seat belts, and exercising are great places to start. But, as life gets hectic and stress creeps in, the physical dimension is usually the first to go. We are too busy to exercise, we don't have enough time to eat lunch, we drink too much coffee, and we don't get enough sleep. These are all things that we do that are detrimental to both our physical well-being and other areas of life as well.

Physical wellness encompasses a variety of healthy behaviors including adequate exercise, proper nutrition, and abstaining from harmful habits such as drug use and alcohol abuse. It means learning about and identifying symptoms of disease, getting regular medical checkups, and protecting yourself from injuries and harm. Developing such healthy habits today will not only add years to your life but will enhance the enjoyment and quality of those years.

Tips for optimal physical wellness:

- Exercise daily
- Get adequate rest
- Use seat belts, helmets, and other protective equipment
- Learn to recognize early signs of illness
- Practice safer sex, if you are sexually active
- Eat a variety of healthy foods
- Control your meal portions
- Stop smoking and protect yourself against second-hand smoke
- Use alcohol in moderation, if at all

Emotional Dimension: We often keep things inside instead of expressing ourselves in a healthy way. We don't have to deny how we feel. We can tell people what we think while expressing ourselves in a constructive manner. Emotional wellness means understanding how we feel, accepting our feelings, and learning how to express and cope with our emotions.

Emotional wellness is a dynamic state that fluctuates frequently with your other six dimensions of wellness. Being emotionally well is typically defined as possessing the ability to feel and express human emotions such as happiness, sadness, and anger. It means having the ability to love and be loved and achieving a sense of fulfillment in life. Identifying the obstacles that prevent us from achieving emotional wellness and taking appropriate steps to cope with such problems is also important. Emotional wellness encompasses optimism, self-esteem, self-acceptance, and the ability to share feelings.

Tips for optimal emotional wellness:

- Tune-in to your thoughts and feelings
- Cultivate an optimistic attitude
- Seek and provide support
- Learn time management skills
- Practice stress management techniques
- Accept and forgive yourself.

Intellectual Dimension: Intellectual wellness is characterized by the ability to make sound decisions and to think critically. It includes openness to new ideas; motivation to master new skills; and a sense of humor, creativity, and curiosity. Striving for personal growth and a willingness to seek out and use new information in an effective manner for personal and social development are also part of intellectual wellness.

The intellectual dimension encourages creative, stimulating mental activities. Our minds need to be continually inspired and exercised just as our bodies do. People who possess a high level of intellectual wellness have an active mind and continue to learn. An intellectually well person uses the resources available to expand one's knowledge and improve skills. Keeping up-to-date on current events and participating in activities that arouse our minds are also important.

Tips and suggestions for optimal intellectual wellness include:

- Take a course or workshop
- Learn (or perfect) a foreign language
- Seek out people who challenge you intellectually
- Read
- Learn to appreciate art

Social Dimension: Making contact and reaching out to others can be difficult, but very rewarding. Communication and sharing is important to your social life and vital to your sense of well-being.

Social wellness refers to our ability to interact successfully in our global community and to live up to the expectations and demands of our personal roles. This means learning good communication skills, developing intimacy with others, and creating a support network of friends and family members.

Social wellness includes showing respect for others and yourself. Contributing to your community and to the world builds a sense of belonging.

Tips and suggestions for optimal social wellness include:

- Cultivate healthy relationships
- Get involved
- Contribute to your community
- Share your talents and skills
- Communicate your thoughts, feelings, and ideas

Spiritual Dimension: No matter what religion you practice, your spiritual sense of wellness is the part of you that develops values. Everyone creates their own rules that provide a sense of who they are and why things work the way they do. A spiritual center can allow you to answer tough questions like "Am I on the right track?" It can give you something to turn to during hard times. Just a few minutes a day of quiet time to gather your thoughts can have powerful results.

Spiritual wellness involves possessing a set of guiding beliefs, principles, or values that help give direction to one's life. It encompasses a high level of faith, hope, and commitment to your individual beliefs that provide a sense of meaning and

purpose. It is willingness to seek meaning and purpose in human existence, to question everything and to appreciate the things which cannot be readily explained or understood.

People can derive meaning and purpose through nature, art, music, religion, meditation, or good deeds performed for others. Spirituality transcends the individual to create a common bond with humanity. A spiritually well person seeks harmony between what lies within as well as the forces outside.

Tips and suggestions for optimal spiritual wellness:

- Explore your spiritual core
- Spend time alone/meditate regularly
- Be inquisitive and curious
- Be fully present in everything you do
- Listen with your heart and live by your principles
- Allow yourself and those around you the freedom to be who they are
- See opportunities for growth in the challenges life brings you

Environmental Wellness: Environmental wellness is an awareness of the unstable state of the earth and the effects of your daily habits on the physical environment. It consists of maintaining a way of life that maximizes harmony with the earth and minimizes harm to the environment. It includes being involved in socially responsible activities to protect the environment. Examples of environmental threats include ultraviolet radiation in the sunlight, air, chemical, noise, water pollution, and second-hand smoke.

Although some environmental concerns are beyond our control, there are things that can be done to promote a healthier earth.

Tips and suggestions for optimal environmental wellness:

- Stop your junk mail
- Conserve water and other resources
- Minimize chemical use
- Reduce, Reuse, Recycle
- Renew your relationship with the earth

Occupational Dimension: It may include the actual work that you do, the roles that you play and/or the responsibilities that you have as a full time parent or student. Being occupationally well means seeking opportunities to grow professionally and to be fulfilled in your "JOB" whatever that may be.

Occupational/Vocational wellness involves preparing and making use of your gifts, skills, and talents in order to gain purpose, happiness, and enrichment in your life. The development of occupational satisfaction and wellness is related to your attitude about your work. Achieving optimal occupational wellness allows you to maintain a positive attitude and experience satisfaction/pleasure in your employment.

The occupationally well individual contributes her/his unique skills/talents to work that is meaningful and rewarding. Values are expressed through involvement in activities that are personally rewarding for you and make a contribution to the well being of the community at large. Occupational wellness means successfully integrating a commitment to your occupation into a total lifestyle that is satisfying and rewarding.

Tips and suggestions for optimal occupational wellness include:

- Explore a variety of career options
- Create a vision for your future
- Choose a career that suits your personality, interests, and talents
- Visit a career planning/placement office and use the available resources
- Be open to change and learn new skills

Achieving a balanced sense of wellness is an ongoing and individual process. Each person has a different approach and timeline for making positive changes. You can better enjoy all that life has to offer by being balanced, well rounded and healthy. Each small change you make in one area will have a positive affect in all the other dimensions. So why not start today?

Source: Lansing Community College

Self-Care Assessment Worksheet

This assessment tool provides an overview of effective strategies to maintain self-care. After completing the full assessment, choose one item from each area that you will actively work to improve.

Using the scale below, rate the following areas in terms of frequency:

- 5 = Frequently
- 4 = Occasionally
- 3 = Rarely
- 2 = Never
- 1 = It never occurred to me

Physical Self-Care

- ___ Eat regularly (e.g. breakfast, lunch and dinner)
- ___ Eat healthy
- ___ Exercise
- ___ Get regular medical care for prevention
- ___ Get medical care when needed
- ___ Take time off when needed
- ___ Get massages
- ___ Dance, swim, walk, run, play sports, sing, or do some other physical activity that is fun
- ___ Take time to be sexual—with yourself, with a partner
- ___ Get enough sleep
- ___ Wear clothes you like
- ___ Take vacations
- ___ Take day trips or mini-vacations
- ___ Make time away from telephones
- ___ Other:

Psychological Self-Care

- ___ Make time for self-reflection
- ___ Have your own personal psychotherapy
- ___ Write in a journal
- ___ Read literature that is unrelated to work
- ___ Do something at which you are not expert or in charge
- ___ Decrease stress in your life

- ___ Let others know different aspects of you
- ___ Notice your inner experience—listen to your thoughts, judgments, beliefs, attitudes, and feelings
- ___ Engage your intelligence in a new area, e.g. go to an art museum, history exhibit, sports event, auction, theater performance
- ___ Practice receiving from others
- ___ Be curious
- ___ Say “no” to extra responsibilities sometimes
- ___ Other:

Emotional Self-Care

- ___ Spend time with others whose company you enjoy
- ___ Stay in contact with important people in your life
- ___ Give yourself affirmations, praise yourself
- ___ Love yourself
- ___ Re-read favorite books, re-view favorite movies
- ___ Identify comforting activities, objects, people, relationships, places and seek them out
- ___ Allow yourself to cry
- ___ Find things that make you laugh
- ___ Express your outrage in social action, letters and donations, marches, protests
- ___ Play with children
- ___ Other:

Spiritual Self-Care

- ___ Make time for reflection
- ___ Spend time with nature
- ___ Find a spiritual connection or community
- ___ Be open to inspiration
- ___ Cherish your optimism and hope
- ___ Be aware of nonmaterial aspects of life
- ___ Try at times not to be in charge or the expert
- ___ Be open to not knowing

- ___ Identify what is meaningful to you and notice its place in your life
- ___ Meditate
- ___ Pray
- ___ Sing
- ___ Spend time with children
- ___ Have experiences of awe
- ___ Contribute to causes in which you believe
- ___ Read inspirational literature (talks, music, etc.)
- ___ Other:

Workplace or Professional Self-Care

- ___ Take a break during the workday (e.g. lunch)
- ___ Take time to chat with co-workers
- ___ Make quiet time to complete tasks
- ___ Identify projects or tasks that are exciting and rewarding
- ___ Set limits with your clients and colleagues
- ___ Balance your caseload so that no one day or part of a day is "too much"
- ___ Arrange your work space so it is comfortable and comforting
- ___ Get regular supervision or consultation
- ___ Negotiate for your needs (benefits, pay raise)
- ___ Have a peer support group
- ___ Develop a non-trauma area of professional interest
- ___ Other:

Balance

- ___ Strive for balance within your work-life and workday
- ___ Strive for balance among work, family, relationships, play and rest