

THE FIVE BASICS OF WELLNESS & NUTRITION

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- 1. Commit to personal accountability for the responses to life's challenges and opportunities***
- 2. Take care of your body—hygiene, quality nutrition, exercise (age and condition appropriate)***
- 3. Quiet time—rest and repose***
- 4. Wholesome fun and laughter with family and friends***
- 5. A vibrant spiritual-faith life***

Balance is Beautiful

These basic tenets foster balance, safety, and go a long way to reduce all kinds of stress in life. These tenets say to us we are accepted, secure, and significant.

When you have these five basics central to your life, whether patient or professional, the rewards ripple throughout the years. Those concerns and decisions we all make at some point in our lives will come more easily—such as choice of job, community to live in, children, our finances, and even how we play. Relationships with people will then flow with humility, respect, compassion, patience, and dignity. Why do I believe this statement? Because I believe the roots of all relationships are fed by these basic tenets of life.

1. As we ***take responsibility for our responses to life's challenges*** and those intimidating comments, we remove the sting from those who may not treat us with respect, compassion and commitment. We will also look at a variety of health care options with discretion and flexibility.
2. As we ***take care of our body with essential hygiene routines, quality nutrition and appropriate exercise (age and condition appropriate, of course)***, we give our bodies a greater opportunity for endurance, healing, and sustained wellness.
3. As we ***give ourselves quiet time. . .rest and repose***, we allow our bodies and souls to be refreshed. Seemingly unfriendly comments or advice will have little affect on our attitude and commitment to wellness.
4. As we ***experience wholesome fun and laughter***, we encourage healing and wellness. Our family and friends become our support network. The attitudes of other people are dealt without fear and vexation.
5. As we ***commit to a vibrant spiritual/faith life***, we begin to experience the peace and confidence required to reach for wellness. Our situation in life will be placed in perspective. Each day, gratitude for life becomes our companion. We will be more inclined to hear those threads of truth that filter through the comments of others. Without any strings attached, we will more readily forgive. Forgiveness given and received is an integral thread of healing. This commitment is by far the greatest stress reducer of all.

Tips to Apply for Every Day Life

Wellness has many components besides your genetics. Here are some tips on applying these five basics to everyday life centered on *nutrition, exercise/movement, and stress management*. Be creative yourself; create your own ideas:

1. Commit to personal accountability for the responses to life's challenges and opportunities

- ***Core Values***—*Know your core values that directly influence your every day decisions and actions.*
- ***Listening***—*Learn to actively, authentically listen to experience transformational dialogue and lasting lifestyle behavioral changes.*

2. Take care of your body—hygiene, quality nutrition, exercise (age and condition appropriate)

- ***Hygiene Basics***—
 - *Wash fruits and vegetables before refrigeration and use.*
 - *Don't drink out of any storage containers in refrigerator or anyone's glass.*
 - *Keep sick family member out of the kitchen and confined to bedroom until sufficiently well and free from infection. Children and adults may frustrate over this measure but all will benefit in the long run. Be creative; rearrange the room to accommodate the convalescence period.*
 - *Disinfect bathroom and kitchen counters regularly, in health and illness.*
 - *Reduce the number of household chemicals for cleaning. Utilize a variety of basically nontoxic substances, i.e. baking soda, vinegar, etc.*
- ***Nutrition Basics***—
 - ***EAT WHOLE, NUTRIENT-DENSE FOODS*** (additional resource <http://www.med.umich.edu/umim/clinical/pyramid/index.htm>) —*The simple principle for fiscal as well as nutritional responsibility = Exchange one dollar of junk food for one dollar of quality, whole foods nutrition. (Lots of Water, Plant/Animal Variety of Types, Color, & Balance)*
 - ***MAKE QUALITY FOODS PART OF YOUR QUALITY LIVING***—*Mindful eating that helps you truly savor and enjoy what you are eating. Include what you eat, drink, exercise, stress management, lifestyle choices, healthy surrounding environment. Feed the whole person.*

- **BE AWARE OF THOSE PRODUCTS THAT MAY HURT INSTEAD OF HELP YOU**—Availability and convenience can sometimes be hazardous to our health--treats, indulgences, luxuries, excess salt, sugar, fats, red meats, highly processed foods.
 - **PRACTICE MODERATION AND INTRINSIC SELF-CONTROL**— Seek to practice wellness through intrinsic motivators that say “I want to” rather than extrinsic ones (e.g. external pressures & fears) that only focus on the “shoulds.” Mental and emotional attitudes toward foods also create good and bad habits; chemical/food addictions can bind our body, soul, and spirit and bring on metabolic imbalances, ailments & disease.
 - **CHOOSE A DIETARY PATTERN THAT FITS YOUR SPECIFIC NUTRITIONAL NEEDS (INCLUDING ANY SUPPLEMENTATION)**—Metabolic/chemical individuality is what makes each of us physically unique; your needs are specific to you. Learn how your body functions in order to make appropriate decisions.
- **Exercise/Movement Basics (age and condition appropriate)**—
 - Embrace intrinsic motivators for a lifetime of proactive, positive movement rather than extrinsic ones that only focus on the “shoulds.” Intrinsic motivators focus on the “want to’s”
 - Find ways to move your body throughout the day, particularly while sitting and standing.
 - Commit to walking and/or specific aerobic movement each day during the week (i.e. 15-30 minutes minimum; walk wherever you can—take stairs instead of elevator, bike to your local stores). Get out in the sun at least 15 minutes each day.
 - Build routine awareness of your breathing, posture and evident body tension throughout the day; and establish relaxation, flexibility movement routines. Learn appropriate breathing exercises.
 - When at the computer, take a 10 minute break every hour for appropriate movement to relax body muscles and joints

3. Quiet time—rest and repose

- Give yourself at least 15 minutes of quiet time during the day. Learn to practice meditative regimens (i.e. in thoughts, eye focus, soft, positive self-talk, reading a meditative scripture or saying that help you rest your mind and body).

- *Commit to your meal times being relaxing; and if eating with others, include friendly, non-confrontational conversation.*
- *Turn the TV off at least 3 times a week in the evening to enjoy other more quiet activities (reading, listening to meditative music, calming hobbies or creative arts).*
- *Give yourself at least 30 minutes to one hour prior to bedtime to wind down, garner quiet time for the best restorative sleep pattern. No TV, loud music of any kind,, serious conversation or mental stimulation, any chemical stimulants (e.g. caffeine, alcohol).*
- *Make sure your bedroom is quiet and completely dark at bedtime to increase melatonin levels during the night that brings restorative sleep. Arrange your bedroom furniture, lighting, in such a way that is inviting, calming (NO TV or office workspace in bedroom).*
- *Have a light snack (non-stimulating) one hour before bedtime if you feel hungry (e.g. warm nonfat milk, lite soup, a few whole grain crackers; no sugary foods). Make sure you drink enough water during the day to be fully hydrated at bedtime.*

4. Wholesome fun and laughter with family and friends

- *At least once per week set aside time for some fun and laughter with your family; and a friend. Choose activities that foster wholesome, loving interactions, and support your top core values in all relationships*
- *Watch old classic comedies (e.g. Abbott/Costello), dance together, sing together, play musical instruments together, hiking, biking,, computer, card and board games, concerts, museums, do creative arts and craft together.*

5. A vibrant spiritual-faith life

- ***Seek to embrace an active faith in God.*** *Inquire with your parents, family, close friend, and respected elder how they live their faith. Study your chosen faith and sacred writings with the same commitment you have to wellness for your life. Our “faith factor” can have a direct impact on our healthcare decisions, since our behavior is an outward expression of what we believe about God as well as ourselves and other people. The human spirit actively influences our behavior and body chemistry. A deep understanding and abiding faith in God impacts every area of life. Our belief system or faith ultimately defines our core values we live by every day.*
- ***Respect that others may not have the same faith you have embraced.*** *Nor do any of us interpret our faith in exactly the same way or context. The journey is yours to personally discover and choose what you want to believe and live according to those tenets of faith you embrace. This is how you will “walk your talk” as you share your faith with others—with respect, compassion, and companionship.*

- **Practice Frequent Acts of Kindness.** *Whether simple or more elaborate ways you choose, acts of kindness will not only encourage and comfort those who receive your kindness; but your own heart and life will forever change. Give it try each day (e.g. say thank you, send notes, let others in front of the line, give anonymously in some way)*
- **Learn to understand and practice praying.** *The questions that arise with the health/faith connection can only be fully reconciled when we find ourselves not alone but living life each day in need of hearing God’s reassuring voice. Isn’t that what prayer is all about—communication, conversation, dialogue with our loving God?*
- *When deciding on a particular integrative/CAM therapy, ask yourself these two simple questions then decide:*
 - **Does the particular therapy or the practitioner’s divergent theories on the nature of health and illness violate my own personal faith convictions?** *(e.g. the use of past-life therapy, biofeedback, hypnosis, laying-on-of-hands)*

Is there a “reasonable” medical, metabolic, physiological basis for this particular therapy? *(e.g. the use of neuromagnetic stimulation, Chinese medicine (yin/yang/chi), aromatherapy, reflexology, crystals, applied kinesiology)*

As you gain a better understanding of integrative medicine and complementary/alternative medicine (CAM), your “faith factor” becomes an important constituent of a variety of often perplexing treatment options. You may also find a number of these treatments quite compatible with your faith. Yet, a myriad of treatments involve seemingly ambiguous connections with mystical or spiritual precepts. These treatments may or may not violate your faith conscience. Only you will know.

- **Keep your Free Will Free.** *Remember, as with all faiths and religions, be cautious of any group that attempts to control your own free will decisions through intimidation, threats, inappropriate rules, and devaluation of human life—violating your own freedom of choice and actions. Although every faith and denomination has their doctrines and traditions, you should have freedom to choose those relationships that support your core values and faith, with mutual respect for all. Again, only you will know what is best for your faith journey.*

Congratulations as you begin today to commit to these FIVE BASICS OF WELLNESS & NUTRITION!

(To learn more about incorporating these basic and practical ways of seeking, reaching, and achieving your wellness goals, contact [Sharon](#) to help you get started.)