Find Your Balance

Balancing Wellness Through the use of the Medicine Wheel

The Four Areas of Wellness

Physical
- All your physiological systems working in an efficient and effective way to promote good health.

Emotional/Mental
- Includes your mental well-being, beliefs, outlook on the world, self-image, and ability to cope with change.

Social
- Your social relationships with family, friends, and others. These connections are imperative because they promote happiness and health.

Spiritual
- Your sense of being connected to something larger than yourself.

Teachings of the Medicine Wheel
- There is some variation in its teachings and representations, the underlying web of meaning to Medicine Wheels remains the same: the importance of appreciating and respecting the ongoing interconnectedness and interrelatedness of all things. (CEA, 2010)

What We Did
- Recognized the connection between the Medicine Wheel and the Four Areas of Wellness
  - This relates to the idea that all areas of Wellness are interconnected and interrelated.
- Developed a list of Wellness-Promoting Activities
- Assessed our Own Areas of Wellness
- Planned Wellness-Promoting Activities
- Took Action
- Recorded & Reflected
Wellness Activity Awareness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical</th>
<th>Emotional</th>
<th>Mental</th>
<th>Spiritual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Be active</td>
<td>- Hang out with friends</td>
<td>- Be active</td>
<td>- Meditate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Go for a walk</td>
<td>- Join an extracurricular group</td>
<td>- Meditate</td>
<td>- Volunteer</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Play a sport</td>
<td>- Spend time with your family</td>
<td>- Try something new</td>
<td>- Help out at the Church</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Workout</td>
<td>- Sit down for a family dinner</td>
<td>- Write in a journal</td>
<td>- Yoga</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Go for a run or walk</td>
<td>- Volunteer</td>
<td>- Get some sleep</td>
<td>- Find your purpose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Eat Healthy</td>
<td>- Talk to new people</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Get enough sleep</td>
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How We Did It

The students used a free Pie Diagram app on their phones, or on an iPad which was available to students without access to phones. This diagram was used to create a visual representation of how balanced a student’s wellness was during the unit.

For ISO User we used the app Pie Diagrams by iMathics.

For Android Users we used the app Pie Chart by Selfmade Mobile solutions.
**Assess Yourself**

**Step 1** → Download the App

**Step 2** → Consider the list of Wellness-Promoting Activities and Assess the balance of your own wellness

**Step 3** → Input your Wellness Scores and see how balanced your wheel turns out.

**Challenge:** Keep track of your wellness for one week and try to have a balanced Medicine Wheel.

*Where are your areas of strength?*
*Which areas need improvement?*
*How can we improve these areas for ourselves and students?*

![Wellness Wheel Diagram]

- Physical: _________%
- Emotional/Mental: _________%
- Social: _________%
- Spiritual: _________%

*Draw your Wellness Representation in the pie chart.*

**Journal Keeping**

In addition to creating their pie charts, students were responsible for recording/reflecting on their Wellness-Promoting Activities.

Two Modes of Tracking
1. Journal Keeping
   - Students kept written accounts of their wellness activities.
2. Video Logs
   - Students could record video entries describing their activities.

**Gradual Release of Responsibility**

The goal of Gradual Release of Responsibility is to instruct with the objective of increasing responsibility throughout the learning experience in order to create independent students.

This development of responsibility is derived within the learning process from the teacher to the eventual independence of the learner. This instructional model requires that the teacher, by design, transitions form assuming “all the responsibility for performing a task... to a situation in which the students assume all of the responsibility (Duke & Pearson, 2002).
**Why We Did It**

**Balance is the Key**
It is easy to become too focused on one area of wellness. You must strive to maintain balance throughout all areas.

**Holistic Living & Learning**
Even though the areas of wellness are separate, they are all interconnected and affected by one another. If one area is improved, they will all improve in some aspect. If one area needs improvement, other areas will be impacted.

**What Now?**
- We, as educators, need to be advocates for wellness promotion.
- With an increase of mental illness awareness, increase in stress and anxiety in educational settings, the early specification in sport, and many other social determinants, balancing wellness is imperative.
- We must model and develop an environment that promotes wellness. As teachers, we will be role models in our schools and communities, and must be ambassadors of well-being.

**Sources:**