

Whole-Person Wellness for Older Adults

Whole-person wellness is a multi-dimensional, interdependent model¹ that promotes self-responsibility for wellness in all areas of one's life including: emotional, environmental, intellectual, physical, social, spiritual and vocational.

From helping to maintain or improve physical function, to staving off depression and cognitive decline, to facilitating greater participation in life, whole-person wellness programs in senior living communities and senior centers are proving to be a vital tool in helping older adults age successfully.

The seven dimensions of wellness are defined as:

Social

- Emphasizes the creation and maintenance of healthy relationships.
- Enhances interdependence with others and nature.

Vocational or Occupational

- Recognizes personal satisfaction and enrichment in one's life through work.
- Emphasizes the importance of giving and receiving.

Spiritual

- Recognizes our search for meaning and purpose in human existence.
- Involves developing a strong sense of personal values and ethics.

Physical

- Recognizes the need for regular physical activity.
- Promotes increased knowledge for achieving healthy lifestyle habits.

Intellectual

- Recognizes one's need for creative, stimulating activities.
- Encourages individuals to expand knowledge and skill base.

Emotional

- Recognizes awareness and acceptance of one's feelings.
- Involves the capacity to manage feelings and behaviors.

Environmental

- Encourages awareness of the earth's natural resources and their respective limits.
- Promotes accountability to environmental needs.



¹ Jan Montague, MGS, who developed the six dimensional model of whole-person wellness for use in older-adult settings, played a integral role in the development of the NuStep Pinnacle Award[®] and using whole-person wellness as its foundation. NuStep added a seventh dimension - environmental - in 2012.