

SELF CARE

What Exactly is Wellness?



Wellness is a word that is used in various ways in the United States, it may sometimes describe physical or mental health. However, wellness is a **combination of balance** in a person's life that supports a healthy lifestyle and healthy habits in all areas of life. As early as 1947, the **World Health Organization (WHO)** identified wellness as “**physical, mental and social wellbeing, not merely the absence of disease**”. Understanding the 8 dimensions of wellness and how they act to counterbalance one another can assist with attaining wellness. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) identifies the 8 dimensions of wellness as physical, emotional, social, professional, intellectual, spiritual, environment and financial. Recognizing happiness in all these areas might not always be possible but striving to balance and seek mindful habits in these parts could greatly contribute to overall wellness.

Taking small steps toward each of the 8 areas of wellness will make them more achievable and less overwhelming. To create **physical** wellness, recognize the need for physical activity, quality sleep, and a nutrient dense diet. Rather than tackling all three of these areas at once, try to get more physical activity then think about adding nutritious eating and sleep. Concentrating on one item at a time can be less overwhelming and make it easier to achieve goals. Mental and **emotional** health much like physical health needs to be attended to when things are not quite right but also maintained when things are going well. Realizing personal strengths and using them in a positive way will reinforce emotional health. **Social** interaction will assist you in maintaining wellness. Keep in contact and socialize with supportive family, friends, and coworkers. Make at least one connection each day by calling, e-mailing, or visiting someone. Join a club, social group, or volunteer to be connected to something you enjoy for social interaction.

MINDFULNESS SERIES

USEFUL RESOURCES



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When practicing wellness, **professional** satisfaction and enrichment from work and hobbies will create a sense of fulfillment. Make sure to take breaks like meal breaks or even a walk break to clear your head and help you to focus at work. If work isn't giving you all that you want or if you don't work, try a hobby that is rewarding. People generally know their **intellectual** abilities, expand on that, and learn new things to feel engaged. Reading or taking part in an activity that expands your mind can develop your intellect. Take time for **spiritual** practices and connections too. This may include religion, meditation, yoga, or another activity that creates a sense of spiritual connection. Practice being kind to others for spirituality and remember to be kind to yourself too! **Environmental** wellness can mean the environment itself but that is something that is very overreaching and hard to control. Conversely, our direct environment is something we can control, therefore think of personal surroundings. Organize work and home spaces for a balanced personal environment by reducing clutter. Make time to enjoy the outdoor environment regularly and notice the sound of birds or a cool breeze to assist with being in the present and calming the mind. **Financial** wellness means finding a sense of satisfaction from not only your current finances but future finances. Make sure to find ways to spend your money and budget creatively by setting financial goals.

The 8 dimensions of wellness are a framework for achieving personal satisfaction and overall wellness. If you feel unbalanced in one area, take time to focus on improving that area. For instance, if socially you feel isolated then take some time to expand social relationships for support. Being physically active has been shown to improve mental health and that can create a balance not only in the physical area but in the emotional area too. Keep all eight of these dimensions in mind to achieve personal wellness.



Healthy Recipe:

Autumn Squash Soup

Ingredients

1. 1 extra-large butternut squash (peeled & cubed)
2. 2-3 Tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
3. 1 15 oz. can 100% pureed pumpkin
4. 1 ½ cups apple juice or cider
5. 2 cups low-sodium vegetable or chicken broth
6. 1 ½ cups 1% milk or almond milk
7. 2 Tablespoons honey
8. 1/3 teaspoon curry powder
9. 1/2 teaspoon turmeric powder
10. ½ teaspoon cinnamon
11. Salt & pepper to taste
12. Roasted pumpkin seeds for garnish (optional)

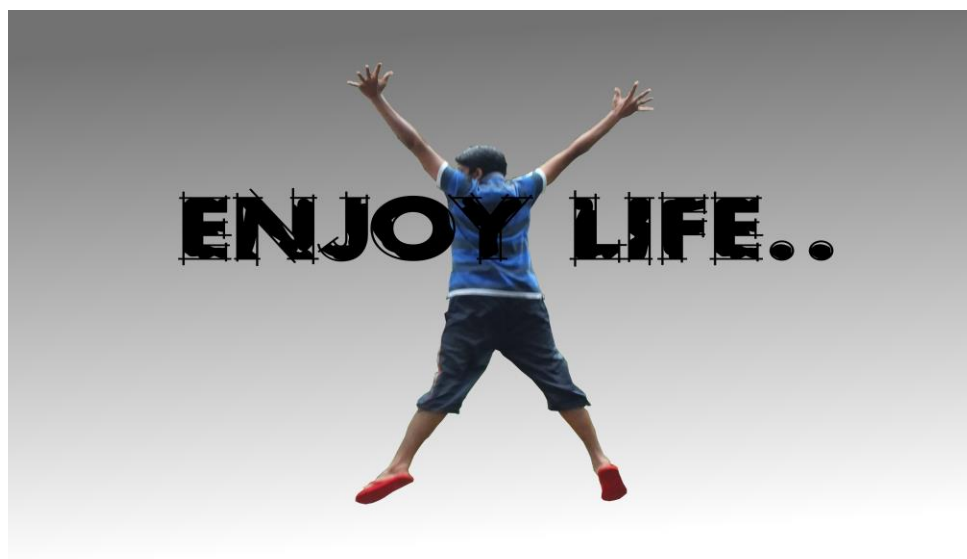


Preparation Steps

1. Preheat oven to 450 degrees. Peel squash, remove seeds & cut into chunks. Place cut squash in baking dish & drizzle with oil, then sprinkle with salt & pepper. Bake for 30 – 35 minutes or until fork tender.
2. Mash squash with a fork or potato masher & place in a large stock pot. Add canned pumpkin, apple juice/cider, milk & vegetable broth. Puree ingredients with an immersion blender until well mixed. Add honey, turmeric, curry, cinnamon, salt & pepper (if needed) & heat through about 15 – 20 minutes at a low simmer.
3. To serve, garnish bowls of soup with roasted pumpkin seeds. Enjoy this hearty soup!

Note: Adjust liquids based on the size of the butternut squash. If the squash is smaller, decrease the liquids. If the squash is very large you may have to increase the amount of liquid





More Resources...

[USDA MyPlate](#)

[Rutgers NJAES Food, Nutrition, and Health](#)

[Get Family & Community Health Sciences Healthy Recipe Videos](#)

[EatingWell.com](#) has lots of healthy recipes.

[Mayo Clinic Healthy Recipes](#)

[Keep Food Safe](#)

[The Core Four Practices of Food Safety | FightBAC](#)

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