

VII. Naturopathic Principle: Wellbeing

Origin

The principle of Wellness has been added by a number of naturopathic educational institutions including Wellpark College in New Zealand⁽⁵²⁾ and Bastyr University in USA.⁽⁸³⁾

Description

‘Wellbeing’, is composed of the two words ‘well’ and ‘being’. The concept of “wellbeing” indicates that it is not only ‘wellness’ that is required for health, but also ‘being-ness’. It is not just physical health but psychological and spiritual health that creates total wellbeing.⁽⁸⁴⁾

Although the criteria for “wellbeing” varies, concepts that have been included are passion and love for what you do each day, financial security, physical vitality, sense of pride in contributing to your communities, the quality of relationships and other concepts. As part of the naturopathic encounter, especially the initial visit, it is advisable to ask patients about their upbringing and to ask them how they define well-being. It is the patient’s concept of wellbeing that is the most important.⁽²⁴⁾

Wellness follows the establishment and maintenance of optimum health and balance. It is a state of being healthy, characterized by positive emotion, thought and action. Wellness is inherent in everyone, regardless of dis-ease(s). If wellness is recognized and experienced by an individual, it will more quickly heal a given dis-ease than direct treatment of the dis-ease alone.

There is a tremendous body of research linking a sense of wellbeing to overall mental and physical health.

Contributors to the Principle of Wellbeing

The following individuals have contributed to the concept of Wellbeing and its importance in overall health:

- **Joseph Campbell** (1904-1987) was an American mythologist, writer, and lecturer best known for his work in mythology and religion. He said:

“If you follow your bliss, you put yourself on a kind of track that has been there all the while, waiting for you, and the life you ought to be living is the one that you are living.”⁽⁸⁵⁾

- **Diener, Suh, Lucas and Smith (1999)** – Positive and negative affects have a considerable impact on health. They discuss these with reference to their mapping the positive and negative components of SWB (subjective wellbeing). Positive ‘affects’ (with corresponding negative ‘affects’ in brackets) include: joy (guilt and shame), elation (sadness), contentment/pride (anxiety and worry/anger), affection (stress), happiness (depression) and ecstasy (envy). Whilst questions can legitimately be raised around the validity of some of the correspondences, they have emerged from a long history of studying SWB and are generally accepted concepts. It is worth considering how many of these ‘affects’ relate to quality of relationships. Some correlations could be drawn with most of them.⁽⁸⁶⁾
- **Massimini & Fave (2000)** – It has also been characterised by: a deep sense of involvement and concentration on the purpose or goal; an inner motivation that transcends distraction and being challenged, where the person has the skills to match the challenges and fulfill the goal.⁽⁸⁷⁾

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