

Chirothots

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What is “Wellness?”

We see the word “wellness” all over the place. We see it in magazine ads, we hear it on TV and on the radio and we see it on signs announcing the names of various health centers. In fact, we usually see the words “health” and “wellness” together.

Many people believe they have a pretty good understanding of what this word means. Their concept of wellness is based upon what has been transmitted to them through the media, as well as what their various health professionals have told them.

Whenever I ask someone for his or her understanding of the word wellness, the typical definition I get usually goes something like this.

“Wellness is a way to prevent illness and disease so you can stay healthy.”

I would like to examine why I believe this is, at the very least, a woefully insufficient definition. In fact, I believe that this definition is completely lacking any real understanding of what wellness truly is.

First of all, this definition begins by describing something from the standpoint of what it is *not*. This violates the most important rule of defining anything. It says wellness is *not* illness and disease.

Second, it says that by preventing one thing, you will have another thing (by preventing illness and disease, you will have health). This is usually not the case in life.

For example, we can get out of debt by paying off all our bills. But, once we reach that point we don't have wealth. We simply no longer have any debt. We are, so to speak, left with nothing! If we want to have wealth, we must do things that actively produce wealth!

The same applies to our health. We can take all types of “treatments” and end up at the point where we are no longer sick. But, once we reach that point we aren't necessarily healthy. We are actually at a kind of neutral point somewhere between sickness and health. If we want to have a high level of health, we need to do things that actively produce health!

Lastly, this definition talks about “staying healthy,” as if there is an end point to how healthy we can actually become.

So, as we can see, the above definition of wellness is not one that has any significant relevance for anyone seeking to continually *develop* his or her health.

Before we can get to a good definition of wellness, we first need to understand what health really is.

Your brain and body communicate by means of your nerve system. The “Innate Wisdom” of the body is what runs, regulates, grows and heals you from conception until death. As long as there is no

interference in the nerve system, your body can *adapt* to all of the physical, chemical and emotional stresses you encounter each day and prevent damage. In addition, it can heal any previous damage done, as well as keep you growing and unfolding into whatever you were ultimately meant to be in your lifetime.

So, a good definition of health is “*the ability to adapt.*” And, we can see from this definition that full expression of your “Life Force” automatically brings with it the ability to adapt, or *optimal health*. This is why many chiropractors talk about “full expression of Life” rather than just talking about health.

We also said that if a person wants to have a high level of health, he or she must do things that actively *produce* health. This is where lifestyle comes in. It has been my experience that most people say they want a healthy lifestyle. But, what they really want is health as a part of their *current* lifestyles. Unfortunately, for most people, their current lifestyles will not allow them to have the high levels of health they are seeking.

So, to complete our definition of what wellness is, there is just one more element we must add. We need to understand *why* wellness is important. In other words, what purpose does a “wellness-centered lifestyle” serve?

Hippocrates once said, “All living systems are either growing or dying.” What he meant is that all of life is a process, and we are either moving in the direction of sickness, aging and death, or we are moving toward growth and the full expression of health and life.

Hippocrates was right if we look at the overall picture. But, we are, in fact, both growing and dying at the same time. Certain external physical, chemical and emotional stresses are breaking us down, while other internal or “innate” processes are building us back up. Whichever of these two processes predominate will determine which direction we move overall...toward death or toward growth. So, as you can see, there is no “finish line” to get to when we talk about health.

So let's put together our new definition of wellness now.

“Wellness means constantly working to increase our expression of life, so we can maximally adapt to all of the physical, chemical and emotional stresses we encounter each day. And, as a result, we grow more than we die.”

With this definition, we now have a clear understanding that we are not just trying to eliminate or prevent anything. We are actively taking responsibility for our lifestyles and living in a way that helps us actualize our potential.

We also see that we all have a choice here. We can live in a way that causes us to have nerve interference and moves us toward sickness, aging and death, or we can assume a lifestyle that helps minimize any interference and facilitates the creation of exactly what we want in our lives.

Finally, we can see that the relationship between you and your chiropractor is as “team members.” The chiropractor's job is to find and remove any interference in your nerve system, and your job is to stop making it.

Together, we are a powerful force that can overcome nearly any obstacle on your road to continual growth and the full expression of health and life!