

Well-Being

Well-Being is a multidimensional concept of an individual's life that brings about their health, happiness, and success, and contributes to the well-being of others. In tangible terms, a good friend of mine described well-being as *a feeling that you are not struggling, that you are healthy, loved, respected, challenged, appreciated, valued, and spending time with your most valuable asset, those you care about most*. Since a complete list of these dimensions is so expansive, I have selected those that I believe most of us *might* have in common.

- **Physical Health**
- **Mental and Emotional Health**
- **Purpose and Meaning**
- **Meaningful Relationships**
- **Meaningful Work**
- **Financial Security**
- **Religion**
- **Spirituality**

And even with that commonality of dimensions, the unique meanings and life practices are as different as there are individuals practicing them. Given the diversity of more than eight (8) billion souls on this planet, in terms of appearance, culture, belief systems, religions, and spiritual persuasions, I sometimes refer to the task of achieving human compatibility as the **Great Earth Experiment**. I define human compatibility as the willingness to learn how to resolve differences that have the potential for conflict. In terms of mental health, compatibility encompasses both inner conflict as well as the quality of external relationships.

In a sense, everything begins with oneself or more precisely within oneself. Particularly, if the objective is to relate to others in some meaningful way. The idea of *bringing* happiness and joy to others to have it flourish in a relationship rather than seeking it from others. One of the practices I

commonly use is to think of something that someone enjoys like shopping, asking a thought-provoking question to get a conversation going, invitation to breakfast or lunch, a “small” present, tickets to a play or the symphony, or even a surprise vacation! Their response to my small gesture is an overwhelming feeling of well-being for me.

Realistically, we also live in very challenging times with events that are often beyond our control. First and foremost, what comes to mind is the health and safety of those closest to us—our family and strong relationships. Their safety and wellbeing are constantly of concern, particularly children and young adults. This source of stressful uneasiness appears to be an everyday part of the quality of life and well-being many, if not most, of us experience, particularly with the daily reporting of tragic events by the news media.

Probably, one of the greatest constructive responses to these situations is to spend most of our thinking and functioning on those activities we can prevent and control—in the present moment. Getting too caught up in the undesirable or horrible “what ifs” about events with which we have little, or no control can seriously impair our well-being especially during times of great polarization. This is the *low hum* of uncertainty that continually affects the quality of our individual and collective well-being.

As suggested above, another dimension which significantly impacts our personal well-being is the quality of our relationships. These associations involve both our personal and professional connections. I remember a statement by an inspirational speaker who suggested: *The quality of life we experience is best measured by the quality of our relationships.* Therefore, whenever, I experience a state of uncertainty, confusion, or loss of control, I usually begin resolution by making an accounting of the dimensions of my personal well-being listed above culminating with a consideration of my future direction, within the framework of my present *reality*. Mysteriously, spiritually, or both, I find the instant others are clear about my intention to move on, supportive opportunities begin to appear that I could have never predicted.

Most of all, soliciting feedback from my “chicken soup for the soul” (very popular book series during the 1990s) spiritual relationships that nurture, support, and uplift me. I value most my conversations involving “transformational exchanges” that are equivalent to reading most 300-page self-help books. Those “transformational conversations” make an indelible imprint over my lifetime. They influence me in maintaining proper perspective and responsibility for the actions I take in designing my future. Transformational conversations in the workplace are becoming a major source of informal group- and facilitator-led source of employee inspiration.

Finally, the greatest sense of well-being I experience is when I have the privilege and opportunity to contribute to the health, happiness, and well-being of others in some special way. I once belonged to an organization which sponsored a Christmas Project every year. The project involved visiting several nursing homes and senior-care facilities on Christmas day where we were paired in one-on-one visitations. The visitations were particularly focused on those who had no relatives or friends scheduled for Christmas Day. The activities involved taking walks, having conversations, and reading short stories. Those were one of the most humbling and fulfilling experiences in terms of my own personal well-being—and I emphasize the words, humbling and opportunity.

Several years ago, Innovations International designed a thought-provoking set of statements titled “**Noodles of Wisdom**”—Advanced, Medium, and Easy. The idea is, through “intuitive selection” from the list below, to apply a noodle as a guideline for your day-to-day experiences and notice what “intuitive insights” you discover. This process is sometimes called “living in the question.”

You might select a noodle from the list below or create your chosen noodle for this exercise.

1. “That which I dislike in others is a mirror-reflection of me.”
2. “If you knew the *true* source of an ongoing problem you experience, you probably would have solved it by now.” Look somewhere else than under the light.

3. “Humility is the experience of the inherent equality with someone significantly different than you.”
4. “Overwhelm is a common way to feed one’s ego about one’s self-importance.”
5. “If we assume that problems and solutions we experience are created simultaneously, then the solution to any problem is *within* each of us.”
6. “If you resolve the *one thing* that holds you back most, opportunities will flow into your life.”
7. “If we stop being run by time, we could focus on the really important things in life.”
8. “If you open yourself to *intuitive inspiration*, you might discover answers to questions that you didn’t *consciously* ask for.”
9. “We have complete control out of a total absence of control.”
10. “When you look back on your life-path, your life has been a singular path, not a series of choices.”

Questions you might ask yourself (one per day or two) about the application of your selected noodle are the following:

1. How does this **Noodle** apply to my life today?
2. How could this **Noodle** influence the quality of my relationship(s)?
3. How could this **Noodle** help me grow as a person?
4. How could this **Noodle** help me overcome a challenge?
5. How could this **Noodle** show me how to help others?
6. How can this **Noodle** help me with life’s direction or goals?

When you receive your intuitive responses just be open until one hits you with overwhelming impact that it is inescapable! This is the intuitive answer to the question you asked.

Taking into account the overall four conversations and suggestions of this series of articles, how would you evaluate your present personal well-being?

Excellent___ Very Good___ Fair___ Poor___.

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