

What is Wellness anyway?

Wellness attempts to make us more AWARE OF WHO WE ARE, where we are, how we got to where we are, how we relate to others and the world and how to be more effective in getting what we want. Essentially, wellness emphasizes positive, proactive contextual perspectives for looking at life. Living with wellness challenges us to frame our lives and our day to day behavior to more consistently operate within four specific contexts or frameworks. The contexts are posed as questions that hopefully demand continuous internalized answers. Said another way, a person who is well, is able to consistently answer the following four questions with a resounding "Yes!"

- 1 Am I doing the best I can do?
- 2 Am I doing whatever I'm doing with a positive and enthusiastic spirit?
- 3 Am I assuming responsibility for what I am doing?
- 4 Am I doing whatever I'm doing with the best interest of "the group" in mind?

WELLNESS

Southern Methodist University

The Choices I Experience:
A Student Perspective



“This was more than a class and more than a learning experience. It was a living experience.”

“Because of wellness, for one of the first times in my life that I can remember, I feel in control of everything that is happening around me. I could have a wonderful day each day without exception and all it took was a few simple words and a bit of thought. My mood has improved, I’ve become more responsible, and my grades are beginning to look up.”

“Wellness has been a positive experience for me. It was much more helpful and thought provoking than the typical health course which I expected.”

“Because of wellness, I lost a lot of the spite that I used to have in myself coming out of high school and instead gained a better tolerance for other people, realizing that there are all kinds of people out there and many of them have so much to offer beyond just what you see in their face value.”

Wellness 1101 is a class at SMU that all undergraduate students take. Students are encouraged to take this class in their first semester at SMU. Your wellness class will be what YOU make of it! This booklet gives you an idea of what students in the Fall of 2004 said about their experience in this class...

“Because of wellness, for one of the first times in my life that I can remember, I feel in control of everything that is happening around me. I could have a wonderful day each day without exception and all it took was a few simple words and a bit of thought. My mood has improved, I’ve become more responsible, and my grades are beginning to look up.”

Spiritual

"I learned that I have the will power to do what I want and I never use the excuse 'I can't' anymore."

"...I gradually felt a greater sense of peace and serenity...I truly felt that I had spent more time with myself and therefore allowed a greater understanding of myself."

"I have learned in this wellness class that living life is not about doing a list of correct things and ultimately scoring high on some life achievement scorecard. It is about taking in both the high and the lows."

"The one thing that I have gotten out of this wellness class is a more positive way to view my life.... Many times we would have lessons, such as the one on relationships, and it would just so happen to be exactly what I was going through on that day."

"I learned to be thankful for being who I am. I often hated myself because I didn't like my appearance, my parents, and myself. I just got tired of seeing the same old me in the mirror. Sometimes, I wished I would be some one else instead. I started to feel different about myself. I learned to appreciate myself and the things I have around me. Now, I am thankful for being who I am."

"Until coming to S.M.U. and taking this wellness class, I spent most of my days looking forward to the next thing. In high school, I raced through each day, keeping myself busy all the time with clubs, meetings, plays, sports, and friends. I rarely took time out of my schedule to reflect on what it was that I wanted to get out of life and what I had been blessed with."

"I learned that we choose whether we will be happy or sad. From that single message, I learned that I should never let any obstacle prevent me from living life to the fullest extent everyday. Life is too short to spend a whole week upset at your best friend, two days mad at your parents, or even 5 minutes angry with a stranger. We should all love one another, and cherish each day that God blesses us to live."



What do the students say about Wellness CHOICES I?

(Selected testimonials from the Fall, 2004)

"I thought Wellness would be of no interest to me, but I truly learned from this class."

"The lessons I learned about life, the realizations I made, and the experience I had were unlike any ordinary physical education class one might pursue throughout grade school."

"Wellness class.... positively altered my outlook on life."

" I don't think any other class has taught me more in such a short time."

" Wellness means a lot to me now. At first I thought that it was going to be a waste of time, and now I think the exact opposite. Wellness to me is about self improvement, spirituality, opportunities, and friendships."

"Overall, Wellness was a great experience in which I gained so much."

"The class helped me better understand myself and the world around me. It gave me a way to get acquainted with the university and with other students in a non-threatening environment, and for that I am very thankful."

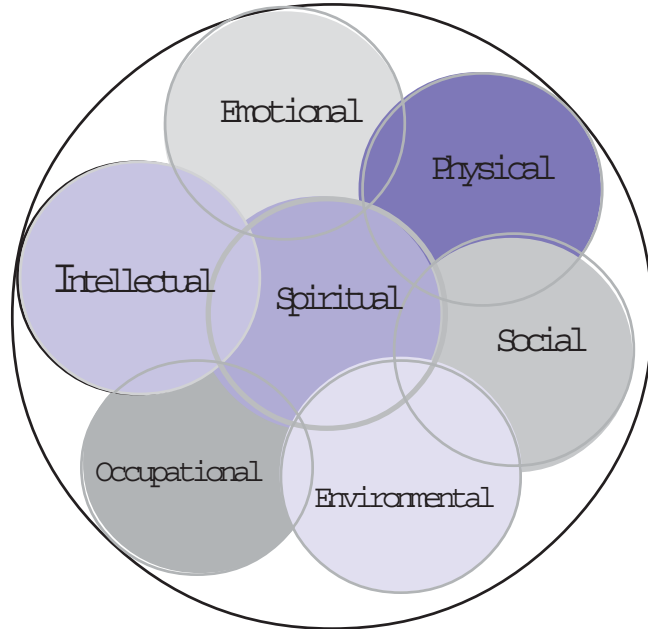
"....generally I was most blessed by the "mind opening" nature of the class. I was exposed to a lot of new subjects, topics, and perspectives of life that will allow me to determine my own definition of wellness, and live it to its fullest."

"Through wellness I have really learned that it is not what happens to you, but what you make of it that really defines your life."

"... this class has taught me many life lessons that could not be taught in any one of my other classes."

Choices

Many people associate the concept of wellness with health. But this class is about much more than just physical health. Wellness is about balancing every part of your life so that you can truly live life to your full potential! Topics of discussion are based around 7 different dimensions of wellness....



"Much of the success I have had in many classes and in my life outside the classroom can be attributed to this very class. I am thankful for every lesson I have learned."

"With the help of Wellness class, my first semester at SMU has been incredibly wonderful."

"There is no way I can capture the essence of what this class has helped me to achieve. At the very least, I can say that it accelerated my acclimation to a new and often intimidating college environment."

Intellectual

"I must say several of the class times helped me intellectually challenge myself."

"I found some of the campus familiarization things we did to be particularly valuable."

"The LEC is a very helpful tool to any college student. It provides you with many resources that other colleges don't offer or charge for. Students at SMU are very lucky to have something like the LEC on campus and available to them. I was glad we were introduced to the LEC in class."

"The class has made its most profound impact on me by identifying places at SMU that I can go to answer the question of what am I going to do in specific circumstances. When I have a specific problem I know there is a specific location I can go to for advice and assistance."



Occupational



"The career discussion reminded me that I shouldn't be selecting any profession just because someone else recommends it to me. I need to find one that I enjoy."

"I gained a lot of insight and met an influential person through the career ideal project."

"The most interesting thing for myself in wellness was how much I learned about my career and the steps I need to take to get there."

"I have learned that we are more in control of our lives than we realize."

"I have gained a greater understanding about who I am and what I truly believe in - why I feel called to be here at SMU and how I am actively fulfilling my purpose here"

"I have learned that I am the creator of my own destiny."

Social

"The main thing I have learned is to never prejudge people."

"If I hadn't taken Wellness then I never would have had the chance to talk with football players, dancers, theater majors, computer experts, and not to mention a few attractive girls."

"I think this is my first class at SMU where I actually knew the names of all my classmates!"

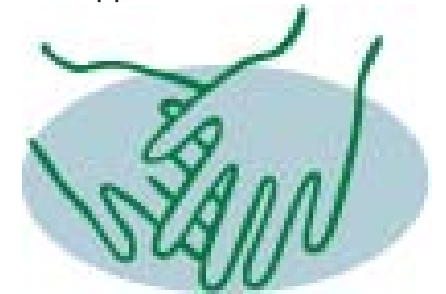
"This class has reminded me not to judge others, but to embrace differences."

"SMU is made up of diverse backgrounds, people, and stories. The 'Elements of Identity' project really showed me how different each one of us is."

" Through this class I have become much more tolerant of people and their actions than when I first arrived at school."

"One thing I have gotten out of this class has been great friendships. In no other class do I have the opportunity to interact with students as I do in Wellness."

"From this wellness class, I have gained a greater appreciation of the diversity of the people in our class."



Physical

"Now I have a better picture of what a work out should be composed of, it's not about the time you spend but how you spend your time working each part of your body."

"The fitness section of the course was my favorite. The personal fitness report gave me a chance to have access to information that I would normally never see. I was surprised when I saw the results."

"Receiving all the information in Weight-Training I was able to learn much more about how exercising works."

"The sessions on physical activity and weightlifting (including the fitness report) really exposed how much I need to work at maintaining myself."



Emotional

"I can decide to let everything I miss about home and don't like about S.M.U. make me miserable, or I can look at all the blessings I have here, and be thankful that I left so much behind. Since this class began, I have truly noticed a shift in my personal wellness and happiness."

"I've learned how to take care of myself better. It seems that wellness class has been nothing but a giant mirror that's been shoved in my face and has forced me to see myself as I really am with all the imperfections and the wonderful qualities I possess."

"Because of this class I now have the courage and strength to face my problems head on, and even resolve my issues before they become problems."

"The greatest thing I have learned in Wellness this year has been to let go of what other people think about me. I have found a lot of freedom in the process. Wellness was definitely a corner stone in this journey."

"One thing that I have learned from Wellness is the power of being yourself."

"Wellness class has been helpful in reminding me to maintain a positive outlook on life and to remember how lucky I am."

"Taking this class has made me more aware of the person I am and also the person I would like to better myself in being."

"One thing I have gotten out of this class is more confidence in myself."

"...I think I have honestly become a better person and more in tune with who I am."