

Improving your Well-Being

By Alan Cromlish

The topic of 'Health and Wellness' is becoming increasingly important with individuals emphasizing an improved work-life balance and living a healthier life. Health and wellness are associated with physical fitness and proper nutrition with the aim of improving your happiness and health. While products and services potentially provide benefits, a great place to start is to define what determines a well-rounded life.

The work of Dr. Martin Seligman, commonly known as the founder of 'Positive Psychology', has been at the forefront of research regarding happiness, fulfillment and health. He and other researchers believe that this is attainable through increasing well-being and reducing stress. To achieve this, Dr. Seligman developed the PERMA theory that focuses on five areas and, if reflected upon and addressed, stimulates sustained and authentic happiness.

- Positive emotion
- Engagement
- Relationships
- Meaning
- Accomplishment

Improving each of these areas is subjective. What fosters and cultivates an area for one person may not for another. However, as you read more, you will find that these are all connected in different ways.

Positive emotions are experiencing happiness, joy, interest, optimism and love. Focus on the positive emotions in major areas of your life and consider the positive things where you work, live and play.

Engagement is where we choose to spend our time and what we spend our time on. Engaging in activities is important for us as individuals to learn and grow, as well

as provide opportunities to socialize with others who share the same interests. Find enjoyment and seek it.

Relationships and social interaction are two of life's most important necessities. Creating strong relationships with friends, family and loved ones is necessary for our own well-being and development. These relationships provide love, care and intimacy that are strong foundations to support harmony in emotional welfare.

Meaning and purpose give us a reason to get up and seize the day and are drivers for happiness and fulfillment. Research suggests we should look for internal motivation stemming from attitudes and beliefs. Find the source of the purpose of your day-to-day events.

Accomplishments are the sense of completion. Setting goals and achieving them is a great feeling and provides us a sense of satisfaction. Consider setting realistic, objective goals which are clear, reachable and measurable. Setting these goals and seeking out to accomplish them provides us opportunities to push ourselves to develop and grow.

We all have different interpretations of what is a good life and each area of PERMA will have a different meaning to each of us. To one individual, one area may be more important than another, but the consistent factor in those living a good life is that all five areas are present and promoted in a positive manner. Examining and understanding what a good life means to you and ensuring that PERMA is actively involved in that life can provide sustainable fulfillment, happiness and well-being.

Alan Cromlish is a doctoral student at the University of Southern California where he works with a Finnish university on student health and wellness. He previously worked in South Korea as a professor of education and was the program director within the Global Educational Institute. He relocated to Singapore with his wife and continues his doctoral work.

