# About Spiritual Wellness

Spiritual Wellness involves expanding our sense of purpose and meaning in life.

* Make time for practices that enhance your sense of connection to self, nature, and others.
* Take time to discover what values, principles, and beliefs are most important to you.

Consider focusing on your occupational wellness if you identify with one or more of the following:

* I want to feel more positively about life
* I want to spend more time in quiet reflection each day
* I want to better understand my personal values
* I want to experience more gratitude and thanks in my life
* I want to learn more about other people’s beliefs
* I want to be more aware of my own values and beliefs

# Motivational Messages

1. Look for the people and things that bring meaning and purpose to your life.
2. Feeling worn out? Take a moment for some quiet time with your thoughts and feelings.
3. Remember to focus on where you are now, rather than worrying about what’s next or what’s happened already.
4. Yesterday is behind us, let’s be present today!
5. Mindfulness is about living in the moment. Take advantage of life now!
6. Take time for you! Enjoy what you love: art, music, nature – whatever brings you joy.
7. Spirituality looks different for everyone. Try a practice that works best for you!
8. Meditation, yoga, prayer, and chanting are some ways to spiritual wellness. What can you try today?
9. Moving your body helps with connecting and centering. Take a walk today!
10. Rocking in a chair is a small movement that can help with focus and calming.
11. What do you want your life to look like? Write it down. How can you get closer to that goal?
12. Take a minute: Close your eyes, relax your muscles, breathe deeply.
13. Yoga can help with a sense of connectedness. Check your local library for any free classes nearby!
14. You bring meaning to other people’s lives. Allow yourself to receive gratitude and appreciation.
15. Today, let the people you care about know how much you appreciate them.
16. Stress and anxiety are everywhere. But, you can control them. Center your body and mind with a few deep breathes.
17. The 8 Dimensions are all connected! Meditation can help improve sleep. That’s Spiritual + Physical!
18. The 8 Dimensions are all connected! Practice yoga or do deep stretches with a friend. That’s Spiritual + Social!
19. The 8 Dimensions are all connected! Positive thinking is when we think the best will happen, not the worst. It can help manage depression and anxiety. That’s Spiritual + Emotional!
20. The 8 Dimensions are all connected! Take a walk in nature and reflect. That’s Spiritual + Environmental!
21. Have you heard of mindful eating? Take your time and eat with awareness today, and enjoy your food with all of your senses.
22. Want a boost? Do something kind for others today. It will make you feel good, too!
23. Be kind to yourself today, and practice self-acceptance for when you’re feeling less than perfect.
24. Are you always taking care of others? Self-care is important too! Take a moment for you today.
25. Do you take time to relax and unwind every day? If not, start today! Find 15 minutes of “me” time.
26. Act with care toward your environment, whatever that space is for you.
27. Live each day in alignment with your values and beliefs.
28. Grief is part of the human experience. Be present to your feelings. Allow yourself whatever time you need.
29. Spiritual wellness isn’t all about reading and meditating. Take time to play, dance, laugh, and tap into your inner child!
30. Spirituality is intertwined with all of the other Dimensions of Wellness.
31. Practice self-care and root yourself in positivity. There’s no need to be rooted in anger or guilt.
32. Let your values guide your decisions and actions.
33. Want to try meditation? There are plenty of free books at the library, and free audio and video online!
34. Adopt an inter-relational view of the world – everything is connected!
35. Physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual wellness are all related.
36. You are simply an individual on a journey of recovery and wellness. Remember not to label yourself, or allow others to label you.
37. All change comes from within.
38. In First Nation spirituality, the Medicine Wheel represents balance and harmony. Today, make it a point to seek balance and harmony in your day.
39. Act compassionately toward yourself and others.
40. Try to write your emotions down and connect with your inner self through writing or journaling.
41. Be kind to others; be kind to yourself.
42. Remember taking good care of yourself will help you take good care of others. Treat yourself today!
43. Today, take time to do the things you enjoy doing by yourself.
44. Nurture yourself! Take time for the things you can get “lost in,” like reading a book or doing a craft project.
45. Take time to relax every day. It’s simple! You can just sit quietly and think about pleasant things.
46. Social action is a spiritual activity. Creating positive change can help develop a sense of meaning or belonging in life.
47. Read about other types of beliefs to help you become more understanding, accepting, and open-minded.
48. Keep your beliefs in your thoughts to use them in your everyday life.
49. Learn about different spiritual organizations or groups in your community and decide which ones are the best fit for you.
50. As often as possible, find a peaceful location to reflect and meditate.
51. Remember: you can learn about other religions and practices through books or conversation.
52. Take the time to determine what values, principles, and beliefs are important to you.
53. As you learn about other religions and beliefs, be sure to be respectful of them.
54. Are you receptive to your own spirituality even in times of pain and grief? This is when we find how our spirituality can help us most. Try it when it counts.
55. Do you take the time to appreciate the beauty of nature when possible? That can help with our emotional wellness, too!

# Positive Reinforcement

1. You’re really improving your spiritual wellness! Share your progress with those closest to you.
2. Choosing to work on spiritual wellness might be out of your comfort zone, but you’re doing it!
3. Take things one day at a time, you’re doing great!
4. Just like a tree that loses its leaves in winter, you’re making room for new growth!
5. You’re not alone on your spiritual wellness journey. Connect with a family member, friend, coworker, or peer to share your experience.
6. If a day passes and you didn’t take time out for yourself, that’s okay. You’ll make the time tomorrow.
7. You’re developing a sense of hope, belonging, and purpose that will help you reach your other wellness goals.
8. Doesn’t balancing your needs and the needs of others feel good? You’re practicing self-care now.
9. Life feels better when we take time out for the things and people we appreciate, doesn’t it?
10. Spending more time in nature? This will help with spiritual wellness goals, but also with emotional and environmental wellness!
11. The 8 Dimensions are all connected; your spiritual wellness journey is impacting all areas of wellness.
12. You’re becoming more present.
13. You’re becoming more aware. Self-awareness opens up possibilities!
14. Mindfulness is changing how you eat, sleep, and go through your day. Keep it up!
15. If you’re happy with a spiritual practice, you can maintain it over time.
16. Volunteering or other giving helps your community, but also benefits your wellness. Way to go!
17. That daily reflection helps shed some of the weight of the day.
18. Remember to check out the Spiritual Wellness Resources for more tips and tricks on enhancing your wellness.
19. You’re feeling more and more satisfied with your life’s purpose.
20. Letting go of negative thoughts improves your physical, emotional, and social wellness.
21. Daily practice will lead to short-term benefits and long-term outcomes. Keep going!
22. How you practice spirituality is up to you. There is no right or wrong way. What you’re doing is right for you.
23. Taking time for yourself is improving your energy levels and your mood. Good for you!
24. You’re using your spirituality to drive your actions and thoughts and give meaning to life. That’s inspiring!
25. You inspire others when you reach out and help when they are in need.
26. Taking the time each day to meditate or reflect on your spirituality is improving your wellness!
27. You’re opening up to exploring different belief systems. That’s great!

# Activities

**a.** Discovery Questions (Think)

**Title:** Get Calm and Centered.

**Description & Instructions:**

We can calm and center ourselves by taking a moment to clear our thoughts.

* Take 2 minutes to close your eyes, focus on your breathing and your posture, and think about nothing
* If any thoughts pop into your mind, acknowledge them and let them pass
* If you have trouble letting the thoughts pass, think of a pleasant word you can think of whenever your mind wanders, like “water,” “peace,” “hum,” or “om”
* You can do this seated on the floor or chair, or lying on a bed or couch if you prefer

Over time, you’ll get better and better at limiting the influence of negative and distracting thoughts.

**Estimated Duration:** 2 minutes

**Title:** Taking Time for Things You Love.

**Description & Instructions:** Spiritual wellness includes taking time out from the busyness and loudness of the world; and spending time alone enjoying what we love: Art, music, nature, family, animals, reading, dancing, gardening – whatever it might be. Think about the things you love and that bring you joy. Do you take time for these things? If not, think about how you can incorporate more of what you love into your life.

**Estimated Duration:** 5-10 minutes

**Title:** Taking Time for Daily Relaxation!

**Description & Instructions:** It’s important to take time to relax every day.

* Turn off the television, silence the cell phone, and find a safe, comfortable space to sit or lie down
* Take 5 minutes and just think of pleasant thoughts
* Whether it’s a past memory, a hope for the future, or picturing yourself in a place that makes you happy and at ease, take the time to transport yourself and relax

**Estimated Duration:** 5-10 minutes

**b.** Physical (Do)

**Title:** Drawing Meditation.

**Description & Instructions:** Have you heard of a Mandala? It’s a circle that represents the universe; a symbol of wholeness, unity, and harmony. Draw your own sacred circle. Take as much time as you need, use whatever colors make you happy, and put as much detail and added design into it as you’d like. Research has suggested coloring a mandala is as a meditation technique, and can reduce anxiety and create a sense of calm. In fact, “coloring a mandala for 20 minutes is more effective at reducing anxiety than free-form coloring for 20 minutes” (Curry & Kasser, 2005).

Unwind and have fun!

**Estimated Duration:** Up to 2 hours

**Title:** Focusing on Optimism.

**Description & Instructions:** Being optimistic is important, and positive thinking can help improve our wellness. Write down positive thoughts and positive changes you’d like to see in your life. Put them in a jar. Continue collecting the positivity over time. Get creative! Use fun colors of papers, colored pencils, or bright markers.

**Estimated Duration:** 1-2 minutes

**Title**: Create a Personal Motto.

**Description & Instructions:** A mantra is sometimes considered a word or phrase that is repeated often or that expresses someone’s basic beliefs. Mantra-based meditation techniques have shown to improve mood and perceived stress. In fact, in one study, a practice involving mantras was found to reduce symptoms of depression, anxiety, and paranoid ideation (Lane, Seskevich, & Pieper, 2007). It can help to think of a mantra as a life motto. Take a moment and think of a motto for your life. Write it down and hang it up in a place where you’ll read it every day. Have a mirror in your space, home, or room? Try getting dry erase markers from a discount store and writing your motto on the mirror. Don’t worry, it will wipe off.

**Estimated Duration:** 5-15 minutes

**c.** Document (Write)

**Title:** Preparing for Wellness.

**Description & Instructions:** Our lives can feel out of balance when we feel overwhelmed or disconnected. Have a plan for when your life feels out of balance. Write a list of 5 places you can go, activities you can do, or people you can connect with when you’re feeling overwhelmed or imbalanced.

**Estimated Duration:** 5-10 minutes

**Title:** Promote Recovery with Spirituality

**Description & Instructions:**

In recent years, a number of mental health consumers have identified faith and spirituality as being critical in their paths to recovery. Factors that promote recovery include a sense of community, rituals and other spiritual practices, an understanding of mental illnesses and psychiatric disabilities, and cultural competence.

* Using the internet, your local library, or the yellow pages, find faith-based or spirituality-based services, organizations, or centers in your community
* Write a list of centers that look interesting or relevant to you
* Keep your written list so you can visit the locations you found with a friend or family member in the future if you ever feel the need to. If you like what you find, make it a regular recovery practice!

**Estimated Duration:** 20-30 minutes

**Title:** Journaling for Wellness.

**Description & Instructions:**

Sometimes all we need is to decompress, and communicate our feelings or experiences without being judged. A journal can help with getting things out in a safe, private way.

* Check your local discount store for an affordable notebook or journal
* Keep the notebook/journal by your bed or sleeping space
* Write about your day before going to sleep, including high points and low points, whatever pops into your head
* Include in your writing the progress you’ve made on your journey to spiritual wellness

Practicing this nightly will help create a ritual for quality sleep, while also releasing thoughts or emotions that might be making you feel stuck after a long day.

**Estimated Duration:** 10 – 20 minutes

**d.** Person-to-Person (Interact)

**Title:** Expressing Gratitude.

**Description & Instructions:** Expressing gratitude is important for spiritual wellness and recovery, and is something that’s often overlooked in our busy day-to-day lives. Reach out to someone your grateful for, and let them know. Maybe this person helped you during a difficult time in your life, or is someone you can count on every day. Whatever the case may be, reach out and say thank you with a phone call, visit, text, email, or even a card.

**Estimated Duration:** 5-10 minutes

**Title:** Making time for face-to-face interactions.

**Description & Instructions:** Technology can bring us closer, but also make things impersonal. Take time for some face-to-face conversation today. Remember spiritual wellness includes finding meaning in our lives, and we can often get a sense of meaning and purpose from spending quality time with those who are important to us. Rather than text, Instagram, Facebook, or Snapchat with your friends and family today, try making a surprise visit to a loved one you don’t see very often.

**Estimated Duration:** 1-2 hours

**Title:** Understanding Your Spiritual Beliefs.

**Description & Instructions:** Our spiritual beliefs can influence engagement, treatment, and recovery in the health care system. It’s important to share these beliefs with providers, group leaders, peers, and other relevant supporters. Make a list of any spiritual beliefs you have that might influence your recovery journey. Make time to discuss this list with providers, group leaders, peers, and even family.

**Estimated Duration:** Up to 1 hour

# Resources

[Brief meditation training can improve perceived stress and negative mood](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/17283740) (Lane, Seskevich, & Pieper, 2007)

This study was designed to test a brief, non-sectarian program of meditation training for effects on perceived stress and negative emotion, and to determine effects of practice frequence and test the moderating effects of neuroticism (emotional lability) on treatment outcome.

[Can Coloring Mandalas Reduce Anxiety?](http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ688443.pdf) (Curry & Kasser, 2005)

This study examined the effectiveness of different types of art activities in the reduction of anxiety. After undergoing a brief anxiety-induction, 84 undergraduate students were randomly assigned to color a mandala, to color a plaid form, or to color on a blank piece of paper. Results demonstrated that anxiety levels declined approximately the same for the mandala-and plaid-coloring groups and that both of these groups experienced more reduction in anxiety than did the unstructured-coloring group. These findings suggest that structured coloring of a reasonably complex geometric pattern may induce a meditative state that benefits individuals suffering from anxiety.

[Relaxation Response](http://www.relaxationresponse.org/steps/)

Follow these six steps to elicit the Relaxation Response.

[UCLA Mindful Awareness Research Center: Free Guided Meditations](http://marc.ucla.edu/body.cfm?id=22&oTopID=22)

The University of California, Los Angeles offers free guided meditations for an introduction to mindfulness meditation that you can practice on your own.

[The Center for Mindful Eating](http://thecenterformindfuleating.org/)

The purpose of The Center for Mindful Eating is to help professionals, institutions and the general public implement the principles and practices of mindful eating.

[National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health](https://nccih.nih.gov/)

The National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (NCCIH) is the Federal Government's lead agency for scientific research on the diverse medical and health care systems, practices, and products that are not generally considered part of conventional medicine.

[Wellness Worksheets](http://www.integration.samhsa.gov/health-wellness/wellness-strategies/wellness.pdf)

The 126 Wellness Worksheets in this package are designed to help you become more involved in your own wellness. Access worksheets, assessment tools, inventories and more.