

# 8 dimensions of wellness

Ayma Aqib  
Orientation Editor

**M**ental health is a term frequently used to reflect a state of emotional well-being, but what does it mean to reach that state? Various studies have emphasized the importance of holistic wellness, as opposed to simply emotional wellness, in order to achieve a true state of self-satisfaction. Although this model was discovered decades ago, the recent emphasis on mental health has brought it back in the limelight, with multiple institutions around the world adopting this model of wellness today.

The eight dimensions of wellness model emphasizes that in order to be truly satisfied and well, one must aim to balance all eight aspects. There are numerous online quizzes you can take to find which aspects you're excelling in and which ones you might need further development in. For now, here is a quick summary of all eight dimensions, along with some resources catered to UW students.

**Physical wellness** is achieved by leading an active and healthy lifestyle and avoiding excessive consumption of harmful substances like alcohol, drugs, and tobacco. Whether you're working out at the gym or walking around the park, endorphins released during exercise reduce pain and stress. If you're having trouble with your physical wellness, Health Services is the place to turn to.

**Emotional wellness** entails coping effectively with adversity in life. This includes managing and responding to different stressors appropriately. A state of emotional wellness also includes building a positive mindset, and being aware and accepting of how you feel. If you feel emotionally overwhelmed or just want someone to talk to, try the UW Counselling Services on the second floor of Needles Hall North.

**Occupational wellness** requires finding a sense of satisfaction and fulfillment in your career. Don't let this overwhelm you — you don't need to have a ten-year career plan for this. Occupational wellness can be anything from exploring possible career paths in elective courses, taking volunteer positions, or working part-time. The work-study program or co-op on campus is one way to help your occupational wellness and is for students on OSAP who are taking a full-time course load.

Although finances are sometimes beyond our control, **financial wellness** is understanding and managing your financial situation. Work toward short-term and long-term financial plans by creating a budget and smart spending. Student Financial Services in East Campus 5 can help you with this.

**Social wellness** means creating satisfying and meaningful relationships with others to develop a sense of belonging. As you start this new chapter of your life, you will meet many new people. Student life can be busy but incorporating time to see friends, even if it's through a study date, will make your time a lot more enjoyable. Joining teams and clubs is also a great way to feel included within a community. Feel free to also come down to *Imprint's* office in Room 0137 of the Student Life Centre to meet like-minded people making UW's official newspaper.

**Environmental wellness** is understanding that our actions affect our surroundings and striving to reduce the negative implications. Our surroundings directly affect us, so be sure to act accordingly. Reduce your carbon footprint and respect your surroundings.

**Spiritual wellness** is expanding purpose and seeking meaning in your life. This also means reflecting your personal morals and beliefs in your actions. Spiritual wellness promotes a sense of inner well-being and peace through daily life. If you're looking to enhance your spiritual wellness, there are numerous student clubs for spiritual, religious, and charitable causes that you can find on campus.

**Academic wellness** is crucial for students and one of the most important aspects of wellness you can practice. This can be anything from attending all your classes, not procrastinating on your assignments, or keeping up with your studies. Immense discipline is required, but pays off in the long-run. The Registrar's Office has academic advisors, should you need help with your academic wellness.

