

WELLNESS MATTERS!

By Lisa Schilling RN

The Foundation of Wellness

As a nurse and certified personal trainer, I work with people who want to improve their overall health, fitness and wellness. That begs the question, what is “wellness” anyway? Is it merely the absence of sickness? The dictionary states that it is physical well-being, especially when maintained or achieved through good diet and regular exercise. I would go even further by including not only physical well-being but mental as well. Our lives are not only influenced by how we feel physically but mentally and emotionally as well. The “inner life” (mental) is often manifested in the “outer life” (physical). I believe to affect someone’s overall wellness you must address them holistically as a unique person with very individual needs.

As I sit down to talk with people about improving their “wellness” (how they look and feel) I touch on 10 Foundational Blocks of Wellness. Just as the foundation is the most important part of any building, the same is true with your state of wellness. Have you ever noticed that people never get too excited about showing off the basement as they build their new home? But great pride is displayed when showing off the finished product. Why is that? Often the important foundation is not very glamorous. It is functional, it is structural and it is necessary, but it is not glamorous. Such is the foundation of wellness. The building blocks to improving wellness are...well...boring. We have heard them before. They are not glamorous, they are not exciting, they are just structural. Many try to build a glamorous “house” without a strong foundation. We all know what happens, it looks good for a while, but it does not stand the test of time. Why—because they did not build a quality foundation. So it is with wellness. Many

people go on fad diets, lose weight quick plans or gung-ho exercise routines, only to see it all fall apart in time.

If this is a known fact, then why do we see this pattern repeat itself over and over again? I believe it is part denial, part lack of excitement. Real wellness is achieved by consistently repeating small healthy behaviors over time. That is a little too boring for many people. They want to start with a bang, even when in the end their efforts are just shot. A commitment to healthy habits for the sake of feeling better and finding true contentment is a key to wellness. For those who are ready to take the plunge into wellness, building your foundation is not a mystery. It is simple basic and maybe, a little boring.

Here are 10 Foundational Blocks of Wellness:

1. Fuel your body with nutrition daily.
2. Move your body with purpose and intention daily (elevate your heart rate, build your muscles and stretch).
3. Make time to relax and recharge.
4. Refuse to be over-stressed. Let it go...
5. Drink enough water.
6. Get adequate quality sleep, daily.
7. Brush and floss your teeth (fight inflammation).
8. Take time to reflect and be grateful daily.
9. Build healthy relationships with others.
10. Lighten up, laugh and have a positive attitude.

These are not radical concepts. But practiced over time, they can add quality and quantity to your life. Simple, boring and doable; build your foundation in wellness and then you can show off the results of your efforts—feeling good on the inside and out. That is something we all can strive for. Remember life is a journey and we were designed to benefit from the trip not just the final destination. Good luck creating your strong foundation!