

Holistic Health Coaching

The 4 Quadrant Approach to Health and Well-Being





What is Holistic Health?

In a holistic health program it is essential to consider four major aspects of life, this includes the physical body, mental health, social life, and environmental factors. We will discuss each of these in greater detail below, with additional information about treatment methods at each level. This 4 quadrant approach has been developed by the American philosopher Ken Wilber. What I present is a very simplified perspective on his quadrants, as they specifically apply to health and well-being.

While many people think of holistic health in terms of alternative therapies, herbs, nutrition, acupuncture, chiropractics, yoga, and mind-body medicine, it is also important to remember how social and environmental factors influence us. For instance, a lack of sun is associated with depression and SAD (Seasonal Affective Disorder) and it is also being shown that a lack of social support can contribute to depression as well. Other conditions like headaches, joint pain, and even some digestive problems can be connected with social anxiety, weather, and the environment.

The aim of this report is to give you practical information you can use to address some of your health concerns. When we can identify the root causative factors that cause disease and symptoms, we can be more proactive about our health, and use preventative medicine to maintain our well-being. On the next page we will start our discussion with the physical factors of the body.

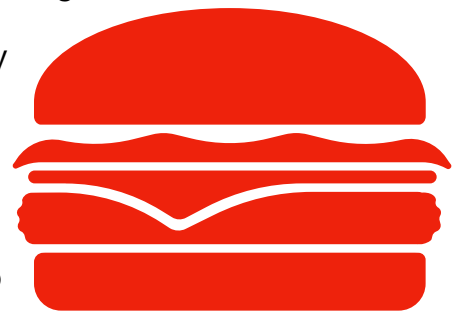


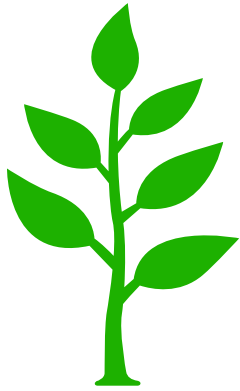
Physical Health - This quadrant includes everything to do with

our physical bodies. It involves nutrition, diet, exercise, and manual therapies like the use of supplements, massage, bodywork, acupuncture, surgery, and the use of medications and drugs. Physical health is a foundation for our well-being.

Conditions of the body that are caused by physical factors are best treated with physical measures. For instance, if you break a bone, you need to have the bone set and put in a cast. No amount of counseling, good diet, or yoga will help you set the bone. This seems like a silly example, but we can understand the simple logic, conditions rooted in a physical condition are best treated with the appropriate physical measures.

Similarly, many conditions like digestive disorders, diabetes, high blood pressure and high cholesterol, are often caused by inappropriate diet. To correct these kinds of conditions it is essential to address the causative factors by decreasing sugar, salt, fats, and other foods related to digestive imbalances. Many health conditions can be greatly improved by making dietary changes.





For other physical conditions like PMS and menopause, herbs can be very good for alleviating pain, reducing hot flashes, headaches and irritability. This is because these conditions are rooted in hormonal imbalances and blood circulation. Other women's conditions that respond well to herbs are cysts, infertility, and Candida.

Manual Therapies - These include massage, physiotherapy, acupuncture, and chiropractics. These treatments are very good for muscle, skeletal, and neurological conditions. They are also very good for chronic pain and resorting the body to a more natural and healthy state.

Western biomedicine is primarily focused on the physical body quadrant since it uses drugs and surgery. While Western medicine is extremely important for emergencies and many other conditions, it is prudent to consider your options, as many times surgery and drugs can be prevented with other appropriate medical therapies.



Mental Health - This quadrant involves everything that is going on in our minds and includes our thoughts, emotions, beliefs, character structures, consciousness, and spirituality.

Conditions like anxiety, depression, self-doubt, low self-esteem, addictions, stress, and mental suffering are categorized in this quadrant. However, they may also be related to conditions of the body, our social lives, or even environmental factors. Since the 4 quadrants are all inter-



connected, we need to consider the role of each of them in a holistic health approach. Treatments such as psychotherapy, CBT, Voice Dialogue, psychoanalysis, and behavioral therapies all work on this level.

Alternative therapies such as NLP, hypnosis, meditation, and self-inquiry also work on this level, since they deal with the mind, emotions, and consciousness.

For conditions that originate on this level, it is best to use the therapies described above. While medications may be useful for things like depression and anxiety, if the root cause is psychological in nature, rather

than having a physical cause, therapies that work on the mental level will be what is required to address the causative factors. For instance, if anxiety or depression is built on negative thinking, poor self-image, conditioning, or faulty belief systems, those things will need to be addressed before any lasting progress is made.

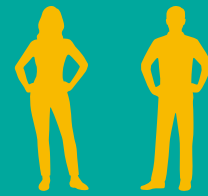


Holistic coaching also works at this level when it helps people get clear about their goals, understand their emotions, find their purpose, and develop powerful strategies for life transformation.

Internal work - and developing one's inner strengths - is also very much an activity in this quadrant.

It should always be remembered that in a holistic program we always want to understand the interactions that exist between the physical, mental, social and environmental realms. In mind-body practices such as yoga, meditation, body dialogue, and other body awareness practices, much of the focus is on developing mind-body integration and harmony. When we develop more body awareness, we can make better health decisions, and when we are more aware of the activities of our minds, we can have more fulfillment and well-being.

Social Health and Well-Being



Our social lives and relationships play a major role in our health and well-being. This area of life often gets overlooked in many holistic and alternative health programs, but there is no denying the role of our relationships and social connections for our overall health.

Research has shown that a lack of social support can contribute to depression, and people who suffer from social anxiety are also acutely aware of how social factors can influence their bodies and symptoms. People with good social lives, friends, family, and community, tend to be happier and score higher on several health and well-being measures.

As an example of how our social lives can affect our health, I once treated a woman with frequent headaches. We did acupuncture for pain relief, and although we got good results, the headaches continued to some degree. As we tracked down diet, stressors, and life activities to find causative factors, we found some specific social triggers that played a

major role in this woman's pattern of headaches. When we addressed the social components and stressors we were able to get even better results.

If social stressors are present in a person's life it can affect their physical and mental health in a variety of ways. Social stressors can cause headaches, pain, anxiety, depression, fatigue, and possibly even inflammation. When social factors are contributing to a person's health and well-being, it is essential to address these situations. This may involve learning communication skills, couples counseling, family counseling, and therapy or coaching.



As communication is essential for the social level, learning communication skills can be invaluable for improving our social intelligence and ability to connect with people. Good communication skills can also assist us in conflict resolution, and this can be applied to our personal and professional relationships. Other factors that are related to this quadrant are community, teamwork, membership, and leadership. When we are involved with a team or community, and have a role to fill in that, it can give our lives abundant purpose and meaning.

Environmental Health



The health of our environment greatly influences many aspects of our personal and collective health. Environmental factors include the natural environment, living environments, work environments, city and national environments. Air pollution, access to clean water and food, as well as local climate factors can all affect our physical, mental, and social health in many ways.



This environmental quadrant often gets overlooked in holistic health programs, but it contributes to respiratory conditions, weight loss, diabetes, heart disease, cancer, psychological well-being and more. Even things like access to local food, the widespread and easy access to fast food, and the prevalence of antibiotics and hormones in our foods, all influence our health. Unless we take a close look at environmental factors, we may miss vitally important elements in designing a healthy living program.

I know of a case study from a man who lived in New York City in the 1980's and 1990's, and he was an avid health nut and runner. His daily routine was to run up to 5 miles a day in the city. However, in his 50's he developed lung cancer. When the doctors did the autopsy they found that his lungs looked like he smoked a pack of cigarettes a day! However, he had never smoked a cigarette in his life, but the running in the city had left his lungs in a similar condition to smoking heavily. Similarly, today air pollution and other environmental factors are adversely effecting peoples health.



The environmental quadrant also connects to our home and work environments. Even things like driving in traffic or living in busy cities is connected to this quadrant. If you drive in heavy traffic for 2 - 4 hours a day, and this causes you a lot of stress, this is an environmental factor that may be having some repercussions on your health.

While some people may thrive in cities, others do better in more natural environments. Similarly, some people do better in warm environments than cold climates; and cold, damp climates can cause some people joint pain, headaches, or other health problems. Many allergies are also heavily influenced by local environmental factors.



Holistic Health Programs

As we have seen in this report there are four major areas to consider in a holistic health program. While we often only think of health in terms of our physical body, and mental-emotional health, we also need to consider the role of the environment and our social lives. By taking a holistic approach to health, and life in general, we can live in more balanced and healthy ways.

Get Your Free 45 Minute Personal Health and Coaching Consultation.

As part of this report I offer free consultations in holistic health coaching, life coaching, or in my Healthy Mind Program. In the consultation we will discuss life situations that you want to transform, in order to become healthier, happier, and more self-empowered.

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