

TWELVE STEPS TOWARD OPTIMAL WELLNESS

Dr. Fran M. Pinault MS, LAc, ND

Are you satisfied with your family?

Are you satisfied with your career?

Are you satisfied with your health and sense of wellbeing?

Are you satisfied with your connection to community, spirit or a higher power?

If you answer no to any of these questions you may not be experiencing optimal wellness. Optimal wellness includes the physical, emotional, mental and spiritual components of life. When one component is challenged, the other elements are also affected. I would like to outline some of the practices you can do to achieve optimal wellness but first let's explore the interfering factors of wellness and how to avoid them. Our ability to heal (repair cellular damage), adapt to stressful events, digest, metabolize and utilize nutrients is called "homeostasis". We require clean air, water, nutrient rich foods and exercise to do homeostasis. Drugs, synthetic chemicals, viruses, bacteria, parasites, electromagnetic fields, negative self talk, stress and traumas interfere with our ability to live in a state of wellness. Here are my "top twelve" most important areas to create optimal wellness:

1. EAT RIGHT FOR OPTIMAL PHYSICAL FUNCTIONING. Internal organs, the central nervous system and enzymes require an abundance of vitamins, minerals, fats, proteins and antioxidants to function optimally. Lack of these needed nutrients cause organ weakening leading to fatigue and other symptoms.

2. NOURISH ADRENALS AND ENDOCRINE GLANDS.

The adrenals glands help us adapt to stress, maintain blood pressure and sugar, provide reproductive health and many other functions. The adrenal glands require vitamin B5, vitamin C, fatty acids and other nutrients for proper functioning.

3. MAINTAIN BENEFICIAL INTESTINAL BACTERIA. The intestinal tract contains billions of bacteria that help us digest and keep down the growth of illness causing organisms. These beneficial organisms are depleted by stress, sugar, and antibiotics, steroids and other drugs.

4. ELIMINATE PARASITES, OR UNWANTED ORGANISMS. It is difficult to know if you have any of these unwanted guests without tests but it is extremely important to eliminate parasites, yeast, viruses or other disease forming microbes.

5. OPTIMIZE DIGESTION. Our digestive process is the most crucial function in our body that sets the stage for total health or total disaster. It is thought that many disorders have their root in maldigestion and malabsorption. Digestion is related to the ability to produce digestive enzymes and hydrochloric acid. It is speculated that by the age of fifty, forty percent of us are unable to make adequate amounts of hydrochloric

acid, which is necessary to break down protein. Supplemental digestive aids can be extremely helpful for proper digestion, assimilation and elimination.

6. REPATTERN NEGATIVE RESPONSE PATTERNS. We often internalize the stress of traumatic life experiences, which can then cause negative self-dialogue or nonproductive coping skills. When we are hurt we can bury the pain deep in our psyches but it may resurface as emotional, behavioral or belief patterns that are not healthy. There are many types of therapy that help us understand emotional injuries and re-pattern the limiting belief systems that hold us back from wellness.

7. IDENTIFY FOOD ALLERGIES, SENSITIVITIES OR INTOLERANCES. There are three main problems with foods: allergies which are immune system related; sensitivities where certain foods are not compatible with our individual chemistry and intolerances, which involve lack of enzymes to digest certain foods. Health care professionals can help us differentiate these conditions and treat them.

8. DETOXIFY. As we live in an ever more toxic world we are exposed to numerous heavy metals, pesticides, synthetic toxins and other toxins. Our bodies possess the ability to expel these toxins but sometimes become ineffective at doing so due to stress or deficiencies. Detoxification programs are very useful in keeping healthy. Detoxification programs may include sauna, diet changes, herbal medicines and other treatments.

9. RE-ESTABLISH STRUCTURAL INTEGRITY. Do you change your oil in your car after 2000 miles? Do you rotate the tires or adjust the alignment? To keep our bodies well running machines we need structural care. Thomas Jefferson is quoted as saying: "The doctor of the future will give no medicine but will interest [his] patients in the care of the human frame, diet, and in the cause and prevention of disease". Don't neglect your structural needs and receive regular spinal adjustments or structural re-integration.

10. REBALANCE ELECTROMAGNETIC ENERGY. Too often we are robbed of our electro-magnetic energy from computers, cell phones and other sources of electro-magnetic fields. It is speculated that some diseases are caused by the disturbance of EMF's to our bodies. "Energy Medicines" such as acupuncture, Reiki and homeopathy can help re-establish electromagnetic energy.

11. RESTORE CENTRAL NERVOUS SYSTEM FUNCTIONING. Our lives are becoming more and more stressful. Many illnesses are the result of depletion of central nervous system functioning. Rest, relaxation, meditation, prayer, contemplation, fun, laughter, good food and fulfilling sex help restore sanity to our tired nervous systems.

12. SPIRITUAL HEALTH. Our spirituality is a very personal issue and people have differing views on spirituality. Whether it is connecting to nature, to community or

participating in a religious or spiritual practice, our spirituality may be the source from which we draw our strength and energy. It is important for you to find your connection with life.