



The SAMHSA Eight Dimensions of Wellness (<https://www.samhsa.gov/wellness-initiative/eight-dimensions-wellness>) are:

1. **Emotional** — Coping effectively with life and creating satisfying relationships. Understanding your feelings and being able to express them.

2. **Environmental** — Occupying pleasant, safe, stimulating, and respectful environments supports well-being.
3. **Financial** — Satisfaction with current and future financial situations.
4. **Intellectual** — Practice being an intellectually-curious lifelong learner, recognizing creative abilities and finding ways to expand knowledge, skills, and abilities.
5. **Occupational** — Personal satisfaction and enrichment from work (employment, pursuing education, and volunteering), doing things that you are passionate about.
6. **Physical** — Recognizing the need for physical activity, healthy foods, and sleep.
7. **Social** — Developing a sense of connection, belonging, and a well-developed support system.
8. **Spiritual** — Expanding a sense of purpose and meaning in life. Being more mindful and more connected to the world around you (other people, nature, etc.). Explore personal values and beliefs.

What are some of the implications for all of us?

Seek balance

Accept change

Pursue growth

Be healthy

Stay safe

Manage stress

Practice self-care

What are some of the implications (upsides and downsides) for recruiting, training, and retaining our paid and volunteer workforce? Here are some examples to consider:

Emotional

- + Satisfaction of helping others (compassion satisfaction) and, in some cases, satisfaction from paying it forward (as happens with disaster survivors who want to give back).
- Exposure to secondary traumatic stress is common especially for our disaster volunteers and staff.

Environmental

- + We strive to assure worker and victim/survivor safety and security.
- Our workplaces are often very high-stress (with too much noise, commotion, volume of work, and even perceived risk for some people).

Financial

- + For many people, the compassion satisfaction is worth far more than money.
- Many people need to work extra hours and/or two jobs to support their families, leaving less time to volunteer and/or less money to donate.

Intellectual

- + Constant exposure to new information and daily chances to enhance knowledge, skills, and abilities fit nicely with the need “to use it or lose it” (mental fitness).
- We are constantly turning over people, revising our policies, updating our processes, and even rewriting our vocabulary (and continuous change triggers distress).

Occupational

- + We believe in the Red Cross mission and we get to work for an organization the routinely does awesome things.
- The demands of the job may be more than many can tolerate and, even for those who have the tolerance, juggling work life and personal life is often difficult.

Physical

- + For adventure seekers (adrenaline junkies), workaholics, retired military personnel and government workers (people who have survived an extended experience with a large bureaucratic organization), and folks who think sleep is overrated, we're a perfect match.
- People who need stable routines and lots of sleep are easily frustrated and disillusioned by the pace, by things that seem more rigid than necessary, by turnover and constant, change, and whenever they do not feel valued.

Social

- + We form tight bonds and do so very quickly, especially in disaster services. This is ideal for peer support.
- New people (especially shy, introverted people) sometimes see us as being cliquish and then they have a hard time getting connected and feeling welcome.

Spiritual

- + We get to connect with others and experience the diversity of our world, as live out our values and beliefs working in concert and fellowship with many other great people.

- We get to see the best and the worst in people. Sadly, the world is not a just place, it's just a place. That can be hard to accept, especially when bad things happen and we cannot do as much as we'd like to fix whatever has gone wrong.

More Wellness Information and Resources

(including some material we did not cover in the training session)

Healthy eating and physical activity are part of a wellness strategy

- Guidelines for Americans and *MyPlate*. Visit ChooseMyPlate.gov for resources on healthy eating.
- [The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](http://www.cdc.gov) provides physical activity guidelines across all age groups.

Emotion health

- Emotional health refers to a positive self-concept, which includes dealing with feelings constructively and developing positive qualities such as optimism, trust, self-confidence, and determination.
- [Wellness Worksheets – 2012 \(PDF | 2 MB\)](#) provide more than 100 self-evaluating tools for emotional and overall well-being.

Stress management

- Between 60% and 80% of visits to health care providers in the United States are related to stress. Stress prevention and management are vital.
- Learn more about SAMHSA's [stress management resources](#).
- Traumatic stress and self-care information from John Weaver <http://www.eyeofthestorminc.com/self-care/>.
- Download a list of 23 self-care tips from John Weaver <http://www.docs.eyeofthestorminc.com/SelfCare.doc>
- What your pets can teach you about self-care https://pets.webmd.com/ss/slideshow-things-you-learn-from-your-pet?ecd=wnl_dog_022212

Coping

When our homes, cars and offices become cluttered with garbage, we take out the trash. When our bodies are feeling pressured with liquid and/or solid waste, we go to the bathroom. But when our minds and our hearts are becoming overwhelmed with painful thoughts and memories, lots of times we try to hold things inside. That doesn't help. Getting it out helps. Work it out, play it out, and talk it out with someone prepared to listen and offer the support you need. Generally that works best when you share the pain with someone outside your family because what you need to vent may overwhelm and traumatize them.

The DMH and DSC teams are there for you. So is this excellent resource. The ***Disaster Distress Helpline*** offers free, 24/7 support resource for disaster victims/survivors, disaster responders, and our partners:

<https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/disaster-distress-helpline>

Call **1-800-985-5990** or text **TalkWithUs to 66746** to connect with a trained crisis counselor.

Feel free to contact me:

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