

Fostering Inner Harmony: Ways to Enhance Psychological Well-Being

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ABSTRACT

As the world continues to change and evolve, prioritizing mental health is an essential aspect for personal and collective well-being. Through a comprehensive review of literature and empirical studies, this paper examines various strategies and practices aimed at cultivating inner harmony, including mindfulness, self-compassion, and emotional regulation techniques. Many studies have shown that living a life with meaning and purpose, practice mindfulness, express gratitude, identify one's strength, practice forgiveness, fostering relationships, yoga, a good physical health, social support and maintain a balanced lifestyle are some important factors that contribute to enhance psychological well-being. Some studies have also found that personality traits, such as openness to experience and conscientiousness were associated with higher level of psychological well-being.

Keywords: *Inner Harmony, Psychological Wellbeing, Enhancing Wellness*

"Animals are happy so long as they have health and enough to eat. Human beings, one feels, ought to be, but in the modern world they are not" (Russell, 1930).

The 21st century has brought about profound changes in the lives of people around the world. These changes, driven by technological advancements, shifts in societal values, and global challenges, have had a significant impact on the wellbeing of an individuals and communities. Life became so chaotic that everyone is always rushing about and worrying about their work and activities. This way of living directly affects the health of an individual and leads to a wide range of mental health challenges. An individual's mental health plays a crucial role in their overall psychological and physical wellness. Thus, prioritizing mental and emotional health and wellness is not only beneficial for individuals but also essential for creating healthier, more resilient communities and societies.

The terms well-being, pleasure, and happiness are used in interchangeably in everyday language, but their meanings tend to be different in technical contexts like philosophy or psychology. Pleasure refers to experience that feels good and is often seen as a component of wellbeing. Haybron (2020) states that happiness is frequently viewed as either "the individual's balance of pleasant over unpleasant experience" or as the state of being satisfied

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with one's life as a whole. Whereas well-being is not just the absence of disease or illness as it's a combination of a person's physical, mental, emotional, and social health factors. Ryan and Deci (2001) describe the two main approaches of well-being. First, the **hedonic** approach: the term "hedonic" well-being refers to subjective feelings of happiness. It consists of two elements: a cognitive element (satisfaction with life) and an emotional element (high positive affect and low negative affect) (Carruthers & Hood, 2004). The second approach, the **eudaimonic** approach believes that well-being involves more than just being happy. It describes well-being as "fulfilling one's potential in a process of self-realization and includes concepts such as fully functioning person, meaningfulness, self-actualization, and vitality" (Fava & Ruini, 2003).

Psychological Wellbeing

Psychological well-being has been defined as the combination of feeling good and functioning well; the experience of positive emotions such as happiness and satisfaction as well as the development of one's potential, having control over one's life, having a sense of purpose in life, and experiencing positive relationships (Huppert, 2009). It is a crucial aspect of an individual's overall health and happiness. Psychological well-being is characterized by a sense of self, a strong sense of purpose, resilience in the face of adversity, and the ability to engage in meaningful and fulfilling activities.

According to Diener et al. (2010) psychological well-being is a subjective assessment of one's life that is divided into three categories: engagement, meaning, and positive emotions. World Health Organization (2021) defines psychological wellbeing as "a state of mind in which an individual is able to develop their potential, work productively, and creatively, and is able to cope with the normal stresses of life".

Ryff (1995) defined psychological well-being as "the striving for perfection that represents the realization of one's true potential" (p. 100).

Carol Ryff's model of psychological well-being:

Psychological well-being is a multidimensional concept. Ryff and Keyes (1995) identified six components associated with psychological well-being are mentioned below:



- **Personal growth:** have feeling of continued development and potential, and are open to new experience, feel increasingly knowledgeable and effective.
- **Self-esteem or Self acceptance:** possess positive attitude towards the self, acknowledge and accept multiple aspects of self, including both good and bad qualities, and feel positive about past life.

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- **Autonomy:** are able to resist social pressure to think and act in a certain ways, self-determining and independent, evaluate self by personal standard.
- **Environmental mastery:** have a sense of mastery and competence in managing complex the environment, make effective use of surrounding opportunities and are able to choose or create contexts suitable to personal needs.
- **Positive relationship:** have warm, satisfying, trusting relationships, are capable of strong empathy, affection, and intimacy, concerned about others' welfare, and understand give-and-take of human relationships.
- **Purpose in life:** have goals and a sense of direction in life, feel there is meaning to present and past life, hold beliefs that give life purpose and have aims and objectives for living.

Different ways to enhance psychological well-being:

- **Living a life with meaning and purpose:** Living a life with meaning and purpose is key to improving our psychological well-being (Kubzansky, et al., 2018). Working toward our goals will give us a reason to get out of bed every day, beyond earning money. A strong sense of purpose gives us a meaning to our life.
- **Practice Mindfulness:** Mindfulness involves being fully present in the moment and non-judgmentally observing one's thoughts and feelings. It helps people manage stress, cope with serious illnesses, and reduce anxiety and depression.
- **Express gratitude:** Learning to be grateful will help people live a more fulfilling life. We can be grateful for our parents, teachers, siblings, to God, and for ourselves as well. Finding reasons to be grateful each day is a simple but effective strategy to improve psychological well-being.
- **Identify one's strength:** Feeling capable and confident is important. Reminding yourself of your talents or unique attributes is one of the best strategies to accomplish this task. This can be a very useful way to enhance the mental health and overall quality of life.
- **Practice forgiveness:** Forgiveness is a gift, give to ourself, allowing us to move forward with a lighter heart and a greater sense of well-being. It's not about condoning or excusing the action of others but releasing the burden of carrying negative emotions. It can free you from negative emotions, resentment and grudges, leading to improved mental health well-being.
- **Fostering relationships:** Surround yourself with supportive and positive people who uplift and encourage you. Building and maintaining healthy relationships can contribute to your overall psychological well-being.
- **Yoga:** Yoga plays a significant role in enhancing psychological well-being. Yoga promotes relaxation through deep breathing and mindfulness techniques, reducing the body's stress response which can lead to lower cortisol levels and improved stress management.
- **A good physical health:** The mind and body are closely interconnected, and taking care of physical health can have a positive impact on mental health.
- **Social support:** Maintaining healthy social connections is crucial for psychological well-being. Spending time with loved ones, joining social groups, or participating in community activities can provide a sense of belonging and support which can further help to increase well-being.
- **Maintain a balanced lifestyle:** Prioritize self-care by getting enough sleep, eating a healthy diet, and engaging in regular physical activity. Taking care of your physical health can have a positive impact on psychological well-being.

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- **Personality traits:** Research strongly indicates that personality traits are one of the most robust concurrent predictors of well-being. Studies have found that personality traits, such as agreeableness, openness to experience and conscientiousness were associated with higher level of psychological well-being (Osamika, et al., 2021).
- **"Me" Time:** When our bodies and brains are constantly working, it's obvious to feel overburdened by life. This, in turn causes our moods to fluctuate more quickly. We are prone to frustration and have limited control over our responses. Regular "me" time helps our busy brains to unplug and unwind. By doing this, we reduce stress, which enhances our ability to be patient, improves our ability to control our moods, and improves our sleep quality.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the 21st century presents a unique set of challenges and opportunities. To prioritizing psychological well-being is crucial for both personal and collective flourishing in today's dynamic world. This research paper delves into various techniques aimed at enhancing psychological well-being, including finding meaning and purpose, mindfulness practice, gratitude expression, strength identification, forgiveness, nurturing relationships, yoga, physical health maintenance, social support, and balanced lifestyles. Additionally, it highlights the significance of personality traits, such as openness to experience and conscientiousness, in fostering higher levels of psychological well-being. By understanding and implementing these techniques, individuals can cultivate a sense of control, purpose, satisfaction, and belongingness, leading to a more fulfilling and balanced life.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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