

What is Personal Well-Being?

What exactly is “well-being?” Under the leadership of Ted Hamilton, MD, Florida Hospital and the Adventist Health System has an initiative devoted to Physician Well-Being and Engagement. The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines well-being as, “the state of being happy, healthy, or prosperous.” Dictionary.com offers, “a good or satisfactory condition of existence; a state characterized by health, happiness, and prosperity.” As I poked around the literature I came across a Gallup Poll that has been tracking the “well-being” of Americans for many years. Each month Gallup asks individuals to report on the quality of their lives using six indexes; Life Evaluation, Emotional Health, Physical Health, Work Environment, Healthy Behavior, and Access to Basic Needs.

I don't know if the Gallup questions are the best indication of “well-being” but it does give us a place to start. As you review the questions within each index... how might you respond? For instance, on **Life Evaluation**, how would you rate your Current Life on a scale ranging from Thriving (rating of 10) to Struggling (rating of 5) to Suffering (rating of 1)? How would you rate your Anticipated Life (five years from now)? Are there dimensions of your well-being that are not addressed by the Gallup questions? Religious or spiritual beliefs are not mentioned nor is the love, support, and acceptance of spouse, children, or friends. What else do you consider as essential to your sense of well-being?

- *How intentionally are you creating a life that enhances your well-being?*
- *Is there something that is preventing you from intentionally enhancing the quality of your well-being?*
- *When was the last time you had an honest conversation with someone you trust about the quality of your life?*

Clearly there are things you can do that will enhance the quality of your life and, I imagine, there are some things that can happen at your hospital or office that can improve the well-being of you, your staff, and your patients. Let me know if I can help.

Thanks for reflecting.

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Gallup's Well-Being Poll

Life Evaluation Index: 10 – 1 scale

Thriving -- Struggling -- Suffering

- 1) Current Life
- 2) Anticipated Life (five years from now)

Emotional Health Index: Frequency of experience;

- 1) Smiling/Laughing, 2) Learning or Doing Something Interesting, 3) Being Treated with Respect, 4) Enjoyment, 5) Happiness, 6) Worry 7) Sadness, 8) Anger, 9) Stress, 10) Depression

Physical Health Index: Data on; 1) Sick days during past month, 2) Disease burden, 3) Health problems that get in the way of life, 4) Obesity, 5) Feeling well-rested, 6) Daily energy, 7) Colds/Flu, and 8) Headaches

Work Environment Index: Respondents perception;

- 1) Job Satisfaction
- 2) Ability to Use One's Strength's at Work
- 3) Supervisor's Treatment
- 4) Open and Trusting Environment

Healthy Behavior Index: Frequency of behavior;

- 1) Smoking, 2) Eating Healthy, 3) Weekly Fruits & Vegetables, 4) Weekly Exercise

Basic Access Index: Addresses access to basic needs common to every physician and most Americans

For more details:

<http://www.gallup.com/poll/123215/Gallup-Healthways-Index.aspx>