

Housing Case Manager Wellness Action Plan



CHANGEWELLPROJECT

PARTNERING TO STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY SYSTEMS

Greetings Housing Case Manager!

Responsibility. It is a word we hear often and use in a way we have all come to understand. Merriam Webster says it means “moral, legal, or mental accountability.” Those of us who work in social services know it can feel like all of that, all at once, all the time. We would like you to consider a new way of looking at responsibility. We would like you to consider your “response ability.” Your ability to respond to challenges in the workplace, to demands from your supervisors, and demands from those you serve. How do you retain your response ability in these situations? How are you able to respond in the best possible way? And respond in a way that fosters as much wellness in yourself and others and minimizes the illness that can creep up on us all.

In the Introduction to Wellness and Well-Being course you were presented with dimensions of wellness that can serve you in this effort. You explored the emotional, spiritual, environmental, financial, social, occupational, intellectual, and physical dimensions of wellness. You were encouraged to identify what is working for you, what is not, and looked at how to develop strategies to improve your overall well-being. This **Wellness Action Plan** is a tool you can use to continue and document your exploration of these dimensions.

Taking care of yourself is a key part of doing your job. We must keep ourselves well if we hope to assist others on their paths. It's important to know that wellness is individual, what works for someone else may not work for you and vice versa. Wellness evolves as you evolve and grow. So, something you have done in the past may not work now. You are a different person than you were then. It's important to remain curious about yourself and be open to new experiences.

You may have wondered about the ninth dimension of wellness that we at the Change Well Project have added to the generally accepted eight dimensions. Housing in California is a crisis, not only for those who seek it but often also for those who have it. In many cases those who are housed and working remain underhoused or have their housing affordability threatened. Working to help people find housing while barely holding on to your own housing is a uniquely distressing challenge and we hear that. By adding this dimension of wellness, we seek to acknowledge this and to provide every assistive step we can, while amplifying your voice and concern about this issue.

This workbook is designed for you while you do this work and as you evolve and grow. You can use this many times over, to reflect on how far you have come and how far you still want to go.

The Change Well Project Team

Emotional Wellness

Managing feelings, maintaining a positive self-concept,
and coping effectively with life

Emotional Wellness is an awareness, understanding, and acceptance of our feelings. It is our ability to effectively manage challenges, and change. Emotional wellness develops inner strength and resilience. Emotional wellness is also about learning and growing from your experiences.

There are many things you could do to build Emotional Wellness. Here are some suggestions:

- Spend time doing things that you enjoy.
- You could pick up a new hobby or re-start an old one.
- Help others. It feels good when others do kind things for you, but it also feels good to do things for others!
- Be kind to yourself. Write a list of your positive attributes to remind yourself how strong you can be during difficult times.
- Reach out for support for yourself and offer it to others when you can.
- Practice meditation, mindfulness, or Yoga.

What are some activities I currently do that contribute to my Emotional Wellness?

What are some activities I have thought of doing to contribute to my Emotional Wellness, but have not yet implemented?

What are my challenges in implementing additional activities toward Emotional Wellness?

Spiritual Wellness

Expanding a sense of purpose and meaning of life

Spiritual Wellness connects your inner and outer worlds to support you in living in your values and purpose. It can take various forms and does not need to be religious. Spiritual Wellness not only allows you to seek meaning and purpose in human existence, but it also allows you to appreciate your life experiences for what they are. When you find meaning in your life experiences, you will be able to develop a harmony with your inner self and the outside world.

There are many things you could do to build Spiritual Wellness. Here are some suggestions:

- Try a Yoga class, whether online or offered in your community.
- Try meditation. Meditation can help you focus on the present moment. Try strategies like box breathing and mindfulness. Check out meditation apps and videos for some guided meditation exercises.
- Visit with your spiritual leader, whether that person is a religious leader, a respected elder, or someone you admire.
- Take walks in nature and appreciate the change in seasons, even if it's a mild change where you live.
- Disconnect from tech. Take a technology and social media break for an evening and be present in what is happening around you.

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Environmental Wellness

Living well by occupying pleasant, stimulating environments that support well-being

The environment is where you are, so it makes sense that it affects your overall well-being. The state of your environment impacts your enjoyment of it. A clean, safe, comfortable place helps you feel good, whether you are in your home, at work, out in the community, or in nature. It also involves living in a way that respects your surroundings. It encourages us to live in harmony with the Earth by taking action to protect it. It also promotes interaction with nature and your personal environment. Environmental wellness leads you to have a positive impact on your environment, whether that's your home or outside world, and helps to make it a better place for you and others to be.

There are many things that you can do to build Environmental Wellness. Here are some suggestions:

- Go for a walk. You can take a walk alone or with a friend. Look around and get your daily dose of Vitamin D.
- Tidy your space. Remove clutter by organizing one closet or drawer in your home. Organizing your space will make it a more pleasant environment.
- Carpool. Coordinate with your family, friends, or coworkers. If you have similar schedules, you could commute together and reduce your environmental impact.
- Recycle and compost. Reduce the amount of waste you are adding to landfills. You can encourage others to recycle as well.

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What are my challenges in implementing additional activities toward Environmental Wellness?

Financial Wellness

Satisfaction with current and future financial situations

Being "well" financially includes the total picture of your financial health, including how your financial situation affects your stress levels and overall mental and physical health. Financial Wellness involves taking control of your finances so that you can lessen this stress. Financial Wellness is a constant journey of adjusting and building resilience to maintain financial balance, not only to pay your bills but also to enjoy a more stable, healthy, and successful life.

There are many things that you can do to build Financial Wellness. Here are some suggestions:

- Meal plan. Plan your meals for the week based on what is on sale. Learning to cook is a great way to start to save.
- Use budget friendly apps such as Flipp or ibotta to save money on items you buy regularly.
- Examine your spending. Write down each thing you buy in a week and evaluate where you can cut back. You can download a budgeting app for help tracking everything.
- Make a weekly and monthly budget. Figure out how much money must go to fixed expenses, like transportation and rent, and then plan how much of what's left over you can spend on other things.
- Consider making your favorite coffee drink at home. An occasional coffee shop splurge can be fun, but a daily retail coffee purchase can easily become a monthly expense of more than \$100.

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Social Wellness

Developing a sense of connection and having a well-developed support system

Social Wellness is building and engaging in trusting, respectful, and authentic relationships. It involves building a genuine connection with those around you and your communities, both macro and micro.

There are many things you could do to build Social Wellness. Here are some suggestions:

- Reconnect with your people. Go see a movie or have lunch with someone you have wanted to reach out to or someone you have not seen in a long time.
- Become a peer mentor or mentee. Whether you are passing along your experience, or benefiting from the experience of someone else, this is a great connection to develop.
- Use social media to cultivate togetherness, whether virtually or to arrange in-person get togethers.
- Start a walking group with friends, neighbors, or co-workers.
- Balance social and personal time and honor your need for occasional alone time.

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Occupational Wellness

Personal satisfaction and enrichment from work

Occupational Wellness is the ability to achieve a balance between work and recreation in a way that promotes health, personal satisfaction, and is hopefully financially rewarding. Ideally, we want a job where we can use and develop our talents and be appreciated for them. We spend a lot of our time at work, so it makes sense to want a career that you enjoy and that allows you to live a good life. It involves work-life balance and performing your role with integrity and enthusiasm.

There are many things you could do to build your Occupational Wellness. Here are some suggestions:

- Attend a networking event or presentation. Find an event held by a local professional organization. These events can help you to build connections and spark new ideas.
- Update your resume and cover letter annually and be mindful of its development.
- Explore your interests. Schedule time for your hobbies or take up a new hobby or activity.
- Develop transferable and soft skills through experience. Participate in community organizations, volunteer experience, or another experiential learning opportunities.
- Get a part-time job. You can gain valuable experience and learn what a career may be like without changing jobs or committing to full-time employment.

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What are my challenges in implementing additional activities toward Occupational Wellness?

Intellectual Wellness

Recognizing creative abilities, and finding ways to expand knowledge and skills

Intellectual Wellness allows your brain both stimulation and rest for improved critical thinking, curiosity, and creativity. It encourages healthy exploration and curiosity. It means exposing yourself to new perspectives and ideas. There is so much to see and do in the world, and the chance to acquire knowledge or gain understanding of something is exciting! When you make the effort to expand your knowledge, you can become more open-minded to new ideas and experiences.

There are many things that you can do to build Intellectual Wellness. Here are some suggestions:

- Visit a museum or art gallery. Many museums offer free admission on certain days.
- Attend a cultural or community event. Explore new ideas while engaging with others.
- Participate in a hands-on activity. Many people learn by doing. Learn something new or improve your knowledge by doing and practicing.
- Read a new book. You can check out a book or download an ebook from your local public library.
- Try brain training exercises. You can sign up for a daily email of brain training exercises, or download an app.
- Try a fun activity that makes you think. Play a board game or try a jig saw puzzle, a crossword, Wordle, Sudoku, etc.

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Physical Wellness

Recognizing the need for joyful movement, sleep, and nutrition

Physical Wellness promotes care of your body for optimal health and functioning. Physical Wellness consists of recognizing the need for joyful movement, nutrition, and sleep, as well as preventing illness and injury or managing chronic health conditions. Caring for your body well also sends your mind the message that you are important and worthy.

There are many things you could do to build your Physical Wellness. Here are some suggestions:

- Try out a fitness class. Bring a friend to an in-person class or try out an online or recorded class at home.
- Practice intuitive eating. Listen to your body and eat what feels right for you.
- Drink more water. Aim for six to eight glasses of water a day.
- Avoid excess energy drinks and caffeine. Cut down or eliminate caffeine for two weeks and see how you feel.
- Be mindful of alcohol intake. Become familiar with the guidelines about safer levels of alcohol consumption and moderate how much you drink.
- Practice safe sex. Take necessary precautions to avoid potential negative consequences, such as sexually transmitted infections (STI).
- Get seven to eight hours of sleep a night. Treat your bedroom as an oasis, away from screens and distractions and curate as comfortable an environment as you can.

What are some activities I currently do that contribute to my Physical Wellness?

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What are my challenges in implementing additional activities toward Physical Wellness?

Additional Dimension of Wellness: Housing

Satisfaction with current and future housing situations

Housing is especially important for you, as a Housing Case Manager, and the work that you do. Let us recognize the challenge of working in jobs that don't afford us the living conditions we may want in this state. The difficulty of helping the unhoused and under-housed while we face those struggles ourselves. Educating ourselves and others and becoming housing specialists and advocates for ourselves and our communities.

There are many things you could do to build your Housing Wellness. Here are some suggestions:

- Appreciate the special challenge of living in a high cost of living state like California.
- Develop a base of knowledge of the various types and systems of housing. Shared housing, renting, owning, property-based housing, housing choice vouchers, low-income housing, and senior housing.
- Think of your residential history like a career as well. Is it progressing? Sustaining your life, safety, and comfort?
- Create a home that enriches your life and allows for the rest, relaxation, and entertainment you want in your life.

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Reflection on Your Personal Wellness and Well-Being:

Our bodies and minds send us signals about what they need. Becoming aware of your own signals, behaviors, and patterns and what they are telling you is crucial to your development and growth.

Use the following questions to provide reflection and develop your awareness about what your signals are telling you.

Reflection:	Your Turn! Write down at least two answers for each section:
<p>Building a better life for yourself does not come overnight. It is the small steps you take every day that help you attain your goals.</p> <p>How do I know I am taking steps to add to my life?</p>	
<p>Moving past your current situation may take action that is out of your comfort zone.</p> <p>What steps can I take to build on my progress?</p>	
<p>It's important to recognize behaviors that don't work for you or the plan for your future. What are some of the behaviors you engage in that are not in your best interest?</p> <p>How do I know when I'm starting to make decisions that aren't in my own best interest?</p>	

Becoming aware of behaviors that aren't in your self-interest can help you make different decisions going forward. How can you do that?

What small steps can I take to get me moving forward safely?

Time for a U-Turn! Recognizing consequence-causing behaviors is crucial to ending them.

How do I know I am going the wrong way? What are some of your maladaptive coping skills or behaviors?

Making a U-Turn when you are on a backwards path does not have to be a giant leap. Several small steps in the other direction is all you need to get back to where you want to be.

What actions can I take to stop moving backward and begin to move towards my well-being?



We hope that this has started a journey for you that you are excited about continuing. Learning the Dimensions of Wellness and honoring what is working and what isn't is key to our growth as people, especially in a demanding world. We invite you to continue the conversation in the Feedback Inbox or the Chat Forum so we can continue to share, listen, and develop strategies to support development and growth for us all.



Resource Page

- Suicide and Crisis Lifeline: 988
- <https://www.affordablehousing.com/>
- <https://www.hud.gov/states/california/renting>
 - <https://www.211ca.org/>
- One Degree: Resources near you: <https://www.1degree.org/> or text any keyword, for example, “food stamps” or “shelter” to 844-833-1334 [Los Angeles County and San Francisco Bay Area Only]
- Five Good Minutes at Work by Jeffrey Brantley, MD & Wendy Millstine
 - Do Not Sweat the Small Stuff at Work by Richard Carlson, Ph.D.
 - The Bounce Back Book by Karen Salmansohn

