

How is your “Mental Wellness?”

Most of us know guidelines for physical fitness, which includes a lifestyle of regular aerobic exercise, along with stretching and strength training. The same goes for the general knowledge of the basics of healthy vs. unhealthy food choices. For example, foods that are rich in protein, grains, and fiber, while being low in sugar and saturated fats, are certainly more nutritionally sound than a meal consisting of a Big Whopper with soda and fries, topped off with a hostess cupcake. Despite this knowledge, saying “no” to these high fat and sugary foods can be so very hard to do!

Even though the essentials of sound nutrition and exercise being a “no-brainer,” all too often people lack an idea of what are the key elements in “*Mental Wellness.*” To support this point, at a recent “Lunch and Learn” presentation to about 40 company employees, I asked them to tell me what are some guidelines to staying physically fit. Not surprisingly, there was no shortage of very appropriate answers. However, when I asked them to offer guidelines for “Mental Fitness” all I got were blank stares and puzzled expressions!

To start, here is a quick quiz to get an approximate gauge of your *Mental Wellness I.Q.*

Below are 8 items that you may agree with or disagree with. On a scale of 1 to 7, rate your level of agreement with each item, being honest and open with yourself.

- 7 Strongly Agree
- 6 Agree
- 5 Slightly Agree
- 4 Neither Agree or Disagree
- 3 Slightly disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 1 Strongly disagree

_____ I feel satisfied with who I am and where I am in my life

_____ I refuse to allow regrets and disappointments cloud “today”

_____ I feel a strong sense of connection with others and do not feel isolated

_____ I tend to think rationally and optimistically

_____ I do not hold onto grudges and can forgive others for not living up to my expectations

_____ I feel a great sense of control over my emotions, thoughts and feelings

_____ I have a healthy sense of humor and can laugh at life’s imperfections

_____ I feel more gratitude on how my life is now rather than focus on what’s lacking

Total your score here: _____

Mental Fitness Range:

- 51-56 Mental Wellness is extraordinary!
- 46- 50 High level of Mental Wellness
- 40-46 Moderate level of Mental Wellness
- 32-39 Mental Wellness needs some boosting!
- 24-31 Mental Wellness is posing problems for optimal health – needs work!
- 16-23 Needs improvement! Actively work on improving your Mental Wellness
- Below 15 Danger Zone!