

TARGETING WELLNESS

THE CORE



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Targeting Wellness

The Core

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Targeting Wellness: The Core

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To The Student

Among all the subjects that you will study in college, health can be one of the most relevant to your life, one of the most interesting, and one of the most challenging.

Its relevance is hardly open to question: everyone can benefit from a basic knowledge of how the human body and mind work and how to lead a healthy lifestyle. Such knowledge can help us to function at our highest level from day to day. It can help us to maximize our potential for the future; to minimize our risks of disease and injury; and to develop our physical, emotional, intellectual, social, and spiritual resources for a longer, more productive, and more satisfying life.

Studying human health is also fascinating. The human body and human behavior are remarkable creations: though everyone has a personal and subjective understanding of them just through being alive, viewing them through the more objective eyes of science can bring home to one just how remarkable they are. Of all the subjects that can inspire awe and amazement—literature, art, music, geology, and astronomy are only a few examples—the study of the human body and mind are the nearest to us, and also in many ways the most amazing of all. Human beings are the most complex of all living things; understanding this complexity can deepen our appreciation of some of the mysteries of life.

Targeting Wellness: The Core is a new textbook published by McGraw-Hill, presenting current information for a person wishing to optimize his or her potential for wellness. It is based on *Life and Health: Targeting Wellness*, first edition. It is designed to convey an understanding of the subtlety and complexity of human life, to increase awareness of the challenges of health, and to help develop self-efficacy: a confidence that can inspire each individual to rise to those challenges and make progress toward a healthier lifestyle.

One challenge of health arises from the fact that health is a dynamic concept. The information that has been discovered about human health during the past 300 years—and especially during the last 25 years—is staggering. But the process of discov-

ery has not stopped; if anything, it is accelerating. New insights are continually being generated by researchers, studied and checked by their colleagues, and published in scholarly journals and in the popular press. Thus, learning about the current state of health knowledge, as you will do in this course, is important not only because it gives you the best chance of making sound health decisions now, but also because it provides you with a basis for understanding new health discoveries and evaluating their implications for your health care in the future.

The second challenge of health lies in the fact that every person is unique and continues to change throughout life, both in terms of personal needs and of personal goals. For this reason, there is no single prescription for good health that will apply to everybody: the road to wellness involves a continuing process of self-discovery, of learning some general principles about life and health and then applying these principles to one's own particular changing situation.

This textbook has been designed to help you meet both of these challenges; key elements are specifically directed at one or the other of them:

- *Conclusions drawn from classic and recent studies* are presented not as rules, rather as recommendations which can be examined on the basis of evidence given.
- *End notes at the back of the book* familiarize you with scholarly and popular sources of up-to-the-minute health information, and allow you to evaluate specific topics from the text in more depth.
- *Straightforward language and illustrations* clarify significant ideas and important complexities of human health as it is understood by health experts today.
- *Technical terms of the health field*, are highlighted with bold-face type and defined where they first appear and in a glossary. This will help you to interpret and apply accounts of new discoveries in health that you may read about, and also to communicate with health professionals about these and

other matters. Terms also appear in the margins next to their definitions in the text as an easy finding aide.

Targeting Wellness: The Core also includes many boxed features designed to help you to personalize the information presented in the book. There are five types of features:

- “*Thinking Critically*” features look at a significant health issue from two possible viewpoints. You are not expected necessarily to agree with either of them, but instead to ponder the issues being explored and to adopt a position that is consistent with the full range of your own understandings, values, and beliefs.
- “*Taking a Broader View*” features look at the wider implications of a particular health topic, presenting international implications, for example, and illustrating how research and actions designed to benefit individuals may have far-reaching global implications.
- “*Finding Your Comfort Level*” features explore a concept described earlier in this preface: the importance of applying health knowledge to your own life in a way that is in harmony

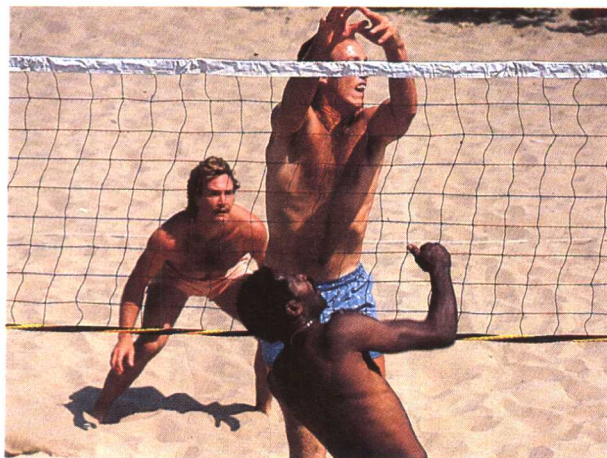
with your goals and values. In this way you can feel confident and comfortable with the actions and behaviors you adopt.

- “*Assessing*” features are brief self-tests designed to help you evaluate your present behaviors and beliefs and relate them to the health topic being discussed. Often based on diagnostic instruments prepared for health professionals, these questionnaires will give you important insights into your own needs and behaviors.
- Finally, “*Communicating About*” features are designed to guide you through some of the many pitfalls in communication associated with various health topics, and to encourage you to discuss some of these topics in a meaningful way.

As the authors of this book, we urge you to get involved in the topics presented. Strive to understand the major concepts and to incorporate them into your own lives as thoughtfully as possible. As you will read in the first chapter and throughout this book, personal health is an area in which each of us can really “make a difference,” both for ourselves and for those around us.

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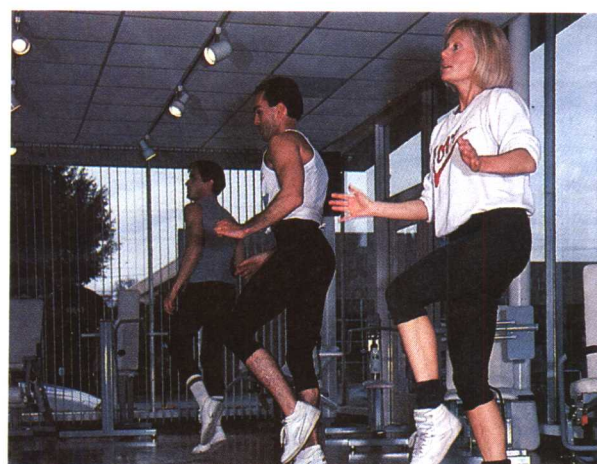
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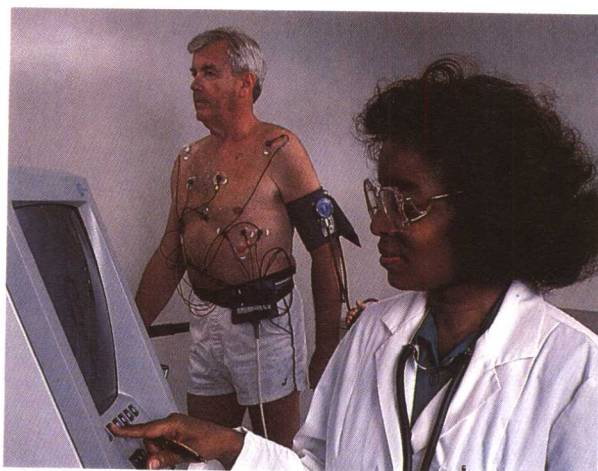
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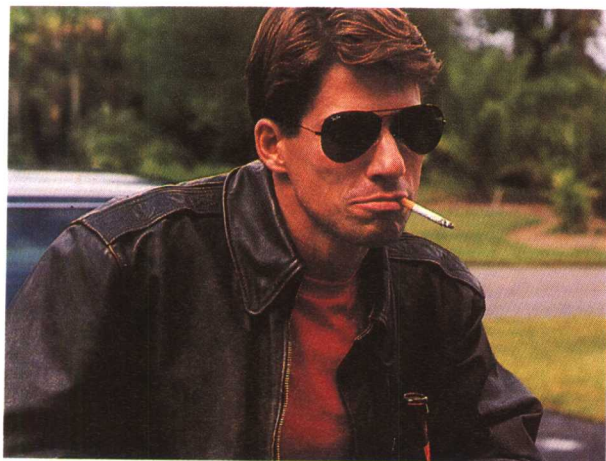
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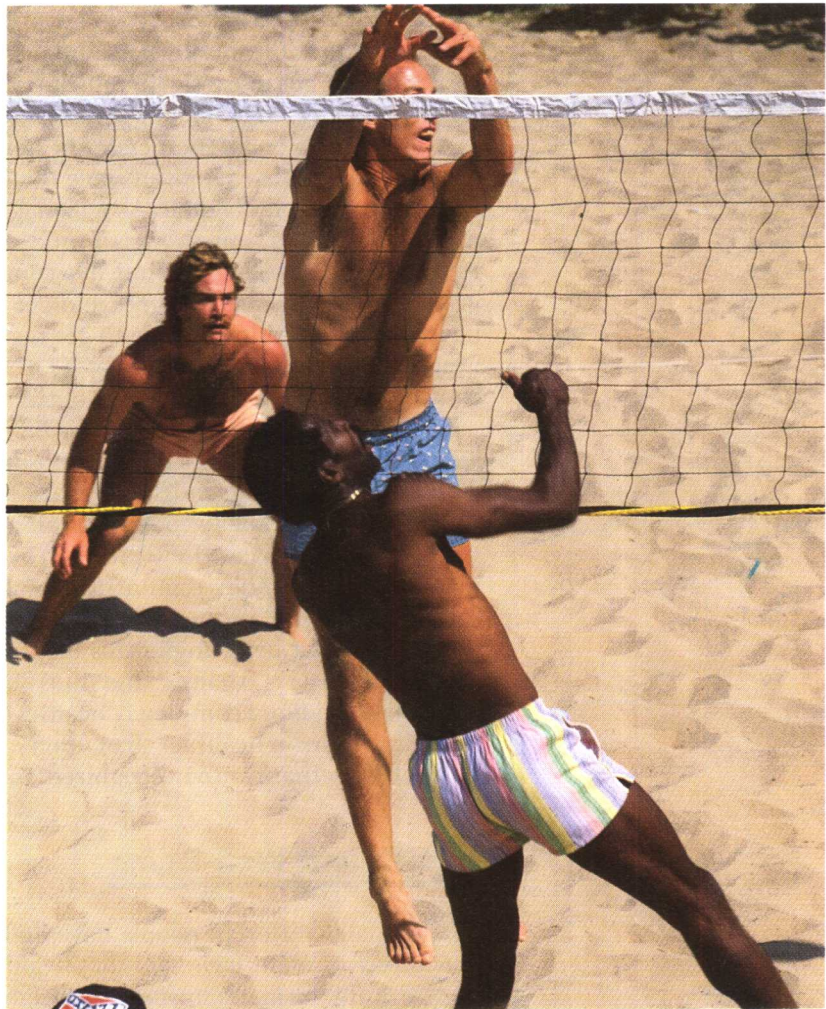
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The Concept of Health

Objectives

When you have studied this chapter, you should be able to:

- Define health in terms of a balance between five distinct dimensions.
- Analyze the importance to health of the components of lifestyle.
- Explain how health goals can be refined by relating them to needs and wants, personal goals, priorities, and trade-offs.
- Describe the process of setting health goals through realistic self-assessment.
- Distinguish between the immediate effects of active involvement in health-enhancing behaviors and the long-term benefits that can be gained by changing one's lifestyle.



Good health—what does it mean to you? Many people take health for granted, assuming that they are as healthy as they can be and will probably remain so. They accept their general level of health as a given. They do not think of their health as a matter of choices.

Yet many aspects of our health are affected by what we choose to do. With the right information, we can choose sensibly and improve both our health and our lives—for the healthier we are, the more vigor and enthusiasm we have to focus on, and achieve, important goals. By contrast, lack of knowledge can lead to significant limitations, caused by health problems.

Almost everyone has parts of their lives which seem quite healthy, and other parts which might be improved. Darlene, for example, is a 21-year-old star on the college swimming team. She follows a regular exercise routine and spends several hours every day in the pool. Darlene wants to earn good grades because she would like to go to medical school, and so she spends a lot of time studying. Darlene has almost no time for socializing. She sometimes wishes she had more friends, but she is very shy. She rarely dates.

Barry, who is 41 years old, is a very gregarious person with many close friends and acquaintances. He is involved in many activities, including playing trumpet in a jazz band. He often goes drinking with his fellow players. Barry earns a living as a taxi driver and appreciates the flexible work schedule, though he finds the job stressful and tiring. His doctor tells him he should stop drinking and get more sleep, but Barry does not feel motivated to do so. He enjoys smoking, too—he depends on cigarettes to keep him alert on the job.

A bright and energetic person in her middle thirties, Melissa has worked hard to support her children since the death of her husband. She is a stable and trustworthy individual. As a teenager Melissa smoked and experimented with illegal drugs, but she has found other outlets as she has grown older. Recently she enrolled part-time in a community college computer science program in order to earn a degree and get a better job. However, these activities have made it hard for Melissa to get regular exercise—she is 15 pounds overweight. Because of the history of heart disease in her family, she is trying to control her weight through diet but is finding it difficult.

Despite his arthritis, Luis, who is 68 years old, always seems to be in high spirits. He attributes much of his positive attitude to his religious faith. His wife, children, and grandchildren are also a source of support and joy. Because of his personality, people of all ages seem to come to Luis for advice. Luis goes to the doctor for a checkup every few months. So far he has had no major problems other than arthritis, although his blood pressure and total serum cholesterol are higher than they should be. He has managed to lower them somewhat by changing his diet and exercising more.

Darlene, Barry, Melissa, and Luis are typical Americans. None of them could be considered completely healthy or completely unhealthy; certain parts of their lives seem healthier than others. The question is: What is it about each of their lives that can be recognized as being healthy?

Health and Well-Being

Traditionally, different people have defined health in different ways. An athletic director might have said that health entails exercising regularly and eating carefully to maintain normal weight and good physical conditioning. A physician might have considered health to be the absence of disease.

Assessing Your Lifestyle

The following assessment is designed to help you explore your lifestyle choices and determine how they are affecting you.

Directions: Respond to each of the statements with one of the following designations: 5—definitely true; 4—mostly true; 3—not sure; 2—mostly false; 1—definitely false. Write the number that corresponds to your answer in the blank at the left.

- _____ I am doing well in school.
- _____ I am enjoying myself, not feeling bored or angry.
- _____ I have satisfying relationships with other people.
- _____ I express my emotions when I want to.
- _____ I use my leisure time well and enjoy it.
- _____ I am satisfied with my sexual relationships.
- _____ I am satisfied with what I accomplish during the day.
- _____ I am having fun.
- _____ I am making use of the talents I have.
- _____ I feel physically well and full of vitality.
- _____ I am developing my skills and abilities.
- _____ I am contributing to society.
- _____ I am helpful to other people.
- _____ I have a sense of freedom and adventure in my life.
- _____ I feel joy or pleasure on most days.
- _____ I feel that my body is fit enough to meet the demands made upon it.
- _____ I feel rested and full of energy.
- _____ I am able to relax most of the day.
- _____ I enjoy a good night's sleep most nights.
- _____ I usually go to bed feeling happy and satisfied about the day.

Scoring: Add up the numbers in your answers.

If your score was 90 to 100, you are making lifestyle choices that promote good health.

If your score was 80 to 89, many of your lifestyle choices are healthful ones. Look at the statements that you marked with a 1, 2, or 3 for areas that need improvement.

If your score was 61 to 79, there are aspects of your lifestyle that could use improvement. Statements to which you responded 1, 2, or 3 indicate areas where you could do better.

If your score was 60 or below, your lifestyle puts your health at high risk. Review the responses you marked with a 1 or 2 to decide how you can make better lifestyle choices.

Statements adapted from the Quality of Life Test in Robert Allen and Shirley Linde, *Lifegain* (Burlington, VT: Human Resources Institute, Inc., 1981): 25–26. Used with permission.

A psychologist might have argued that health includes the ability to cope with emotional problems and traumas. Today, however, most health professionals regard these and many other common definitions of health as incomplete. According to these professionals, the prevention and treatment of health problems requires a broader definition of the concept of health.

What Is Health?

The modern view is that health has several dimensions—emotional, intellectual, physical, social, and spiritual—each of which contributes to a person's well-being. To maintain good health, a person must examine each of these dimensions and make choices that enable him or her not only to live a long time but also to enjoy life to the fullest.

The word *health* originally meant “whole-th,” or “wholeness.”¹ When health professionals speak of health, they are acknowledging the original meaning. The World Health Organization stated in 1947 that health is “a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.”²

Health is a process in which all the parts of a person's life work together in an integrated way. No aspect of life functions by itself. Body, mind, spirit, family, community, country, job, education, and beliefs are all interrelated. The way in which these aspects jointly contribute to the richness of a person's life helps determine that individual's uniqueness as well as health.³

Perhaps the most important objective of this textbook is to help you realize your uniqueness and identify the ways in which you can sustain good health now and throughout your life.

The Dimensions of Health

Health includes more than a smoothly functioning body. It also involves the mind—emotions and intellect, social relationships, and spiritual values. To better understand health, then, it is necessary to examine more closely each of these dimensions, which together constitute overall health and well-being. The dimensions will only be introduced here (Figure 1.1). They will be dealt with in more detail throughout this book.

Emotional Health To a large extent the quality of a person's health reflects that person's emotions, the feelings he or she has toward self, situations, and other people. Emotional health includes understanding one's emotions and knowing how to cope with everyday problems and stress as well as being able to work, study, or pursue activities productively and with enjoyment.

While they are important in themselves, emotions can also influence physical health. Physicians frequently see demonstrations of the mind-body connection. For example, people with good emotional health have a low rate of stress-related diseases such as ulcers, migraine headaches, and asthma.⁴ When stress or emotional turmoil continues for a long time, however, the immune system can shut down,⁵ increasing the risk of developing these and other diseases.

In recent years some researchers have argued that a personality trait called *hardiness* may help strengthen the immune system against the damaging effects of stress.⁶ **Hardiness** is defined as the possession of an optimistic and