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## **Amplifying Life**

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### Care for Self

If you have ever flown or watched a movie that included passengers flying on a plane, you have probably heard the instructions that passengers receive at the beginning of their flight. “In case of an emergency, put your own oxygen mask on first before assisting others.” This phrase can be applied to our daily lives as well. Often, people are busy with their to-do list, a calendar, their next project, and more as the list goes on. It is important to make health a priority to maintain healthy relationships.

Often times our own health is overlooked; if we don't take care of ourselves it is impossible to take care of others. What does that mean? When individuals take care of their own health and wellness first they are better equipped to take care of others. The World Health Organization defines wellness as: “Health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence or infirmity.” This means that being “well” includes having positive lifestyle behaviors and the development of healthy habits. Let's take a look at physical wellness, mental and emotional wellness, and spiritual wellness.

Poor physical health can impact relationships. Healthy eating is a large component of physical wellness. Part of healthy eating is sharing meal times with others, family or friends, to provide a positive social environment. To improve healthy eating, consideration should be given to eating the proper amounts of food, drinking an adequate amount of water and eating combinations of nutrients and meals that sustain and enrich us. Obesity is a growing concern in the US. Regular physical activity promotes heart health, lowers the incidence of Type 2 diabetes, and lowers blood pressure, and benefits mental health. Social support for physical activity increases the chance of making it part of a daily routine or habit. The last big component of physical health is sleep habits. Good sleep habits boost the body's functioning of the immune system. Research shows that the body needs the right amount of sleep to be healthy; too much sleep or too little sleep can contribute to physical and emotional health problems.

Mental and emotional wellness has many meanings. People who are generally positive and optimistic tend to have better emotional and physical health. Sometimes this means being intentional about being positive; one way to focus on the positive instead of the negative is to think about the good from each day and find something to

be thankful for. Another component of emotional wellness is being “mindful.” This means they are aware of what is around them are flexible and willing to consider other perspectives. There are many techniques to increase one’s mindfulness. Increased mindfulness has been found to improve self-esteem, reduce stress, and promote positive interactions. The last part of emotional wellness is the ability to regulate how an individual experiences and express their emotions. Being able to effectively respond to stress is critical for mental well-being. There are many learning processes associated with growing Emotional Intelligence. It is important for individuals to be aware of their stress levels and have a toolbox of stress busting strategies.

The last component is related to spiritual wellness. One definition of spiritual wellness is a personal matter involving values and beliefs that provide a purpose in our lives. For some this might be faith based and for others it is not. Knowing your values and beliefs give you purpose and help act as a guide in your journey as you set goals and move forward.

Don’t forget to take a little time to take care of yourself. If you have any questions, feel free to call or email them in. Shandi Andres, Flint Hills Extension District, 501 W Main, Council Grove, KS 66846. (620) 767-5136 or [sdandres@ksu.edu](mailto:sdandres@ksu.edu)