



September 2023: Involvement & Engagement



“If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more, and become more, you are a leader.” – John Quincy Adams

Welcome to the **September 2023 edition of TotalWellbeing**, your guide to the **8 dimensions of wellbeing**. This month we are diving into how to be involved and engaged with your own personal journey and wellbeing. Involvement and engagement with one's own wellbeing and personal development are crucial aspects of leading a fulfilling and purposeful life. These elements reflect an individual's commitment to taking an active role in shaping their physical, mental, and emotional health, as well as continuously evolving as a person. In today's fast-paced world, it's easy to get caught up in daily responsibilities and neglect self-care. However, by actively engaging in practices that enhance wellbeing, such as mindfulness, regular exercise, and maintaining healthy relationships, individuals can cultivate a resilient foundation that empowers them to face life's challenges with greater clarity and strength. Involvement in personal development also entails setting goals, pursuing passions, and constantly seeking opportunities for growth, all of which contribute to a sense of purpose and fulfillment.

Engagement with one's own wellbeing and personal development extends beyond individual benefits; it positively influences interactions with others and contributes to the overall betterment of society. Individuals who prioritize their own wellbeing are often more empathetic, compassionate, and better equipped to support the wellbeing of those around them. Additionally, personal growth fosters a sense of self-awareness that enables individuals to contribute meaningfully to their communities and workplaces. When individuals engage with their personal development,

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they embark on a lifelong journey of self-discovery and improvement that can lead to a more purposeful and fulfilling existence, while also creating a positive ripple effect on the world around them.

To your total wellbeing,
The MINES Team

Remember that if you or a household member have questions or could use help getting involved and engaged, MINES can help! Your EAP offers free and confidential counseling with experienced professionals, wellness coaching, online mindfulness and personal development training, and other great resources! Plus, an online resource library full of proactive self-help tools! Visit [PersonalAdvantage](#) for helpful articles, personal development tools, a free mindfulness app, and more! Call or log in today to get connected to resources.

Training Course Available!

All of us need balance in our lives. We struggle to balance our careers, our families, our health, our emotions, our social lives, and our spirituality. You can probably think of instances in your life when you've spent too much time in one area, only to have another area suffer. You must find balance in your life and determine where you are and what you need.

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Conquering Those Hard to Break Habits

If you want to lose weight, quit smoking, improve your diet or change practically any other bad habit, roll up your sleeves.

"Habit change is work," says Matthew A. Budd, M.D., retired assistant professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School, and co-author of "You Are What You Say."

Why? Some habits that are the hardest to break are deeply embedded emotionally. Through food, for example, we learn how to soothe ourselves, beginning in infancy.

"At an early age, we learn that food, comfort and security are all connected," says Dr. Budd. "That's why some adults overeat when anxious."

Dig deep

To break stubborn bad habits such as overeating, "you need to get behind the emotion that's driving the behavior," says Dr. Budd.

What to do first: "Determine the recurring circumstances that drive you to food or any other substance," he advises. If you notice you head to the vending machine whenever your boss gives you a new project, think about what's causing the anxiety that's causing you to eat.

If it's fear of failure, ask for help from someone else rather than seeking solace through food. Drink a glass of water or meditate and take a few deep breaths to shore up your confidence.

"Only when you address the emotions underlying the addictive or habitual behavior can you really begin to produce positive results," says Dr. Budd.

Create a game plan

Once you're aware of the emotions driving habitual behaviors and you've developed strategies to deal with particularly troublesome habits, you can develop a practical plan that can help you accomplish your goals, such as losing five pounds by your birthday or giving up smoking.

During this planning stage, trouble-shoot to design a doable behavior-change plan. If, for example, you want to give up high-fat takeout dinners but don't have time to cook, make sure you stock your kitchen with low-fat meals, prepared salads and fruits and vegetables each week so you'll have easy, healthy meals on hand.

Snap back after a slip

Once you've put your plan into action, beware. There will be times when you don't stick to it -- perhaps you'll eat too many dip-laden potato chips at a holiday party.

Don't despair. "To slip is to be human," says Dr. Budd. Instead of giving up on your plan and reverting to bad habits, use the suffering that's associated with the slip as a learning opportunity so you can avoid it in the future.

Ask yourself what caused the slip? Was it something practical -- such as going to the party too hungry, then standing by the potato chip bowl all night? Or was it something emotional, such as feeling stressed about a work project?

Once you've nailed what caused the slip, "let the slip go and forgive yourself," says Dr. Budd.

But before you resume your behavior-change plan, "see if it's in your heart to honestly recommit," he says. If so, strengthen your strategy and fortify your resolve by seeking emotional encouragement from a support group or a network of friends. The help they provide can be a powerful motivator.

"If you have other people watching your progress, you'll be less ready to break that commitment," says Dr. Budd. "But if it isn't in your heart to recommit, be honest about it because, otherwise, you'll just suffer more."

Timing is important when committing or recommitting to a behavior-change plan. "The ideal time to make a habit change is when your motivation is high and when your life is relatively predictable," says Dr. Budd.

A less-than-ideal time is when you're starting a new job, moving, switching careers or attending lots of social events. Your best bet: "Select a time that's a relative clearing in your life," says Dr. Budd.

If you or a member of your household needs assistance or guidance on any of these wellbeing topics, please call MINES & Associates, your EAP, today for free, confidential, 24/7 assistance at 800.873.7138.

To access past issues of *TotalWellbeing* please visit our [newsletters page](#). This newsletter is aimed at providing helpful information about various aspects of your wellbeing and then connecting it all back to important and relevant parts of everyday life. If you have any thoughts, questions, or content you would like to see covered here please get in contact with us. You can email us directly by clicking [here](#).

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