

The Wheel of Wellness: 7 Habits of Healthy, Happy People

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Encouraging equilibrium, peace, and joy, The Wheel of Wellness is a health guide whose realistic advice will help audiences improve their health and well-being.

Heather Martin's lifestyle book *The Wheel of Wellness* explores the essentials of health, using science and tradition to illuminate its points.

With practical suggestions for improving the parts of life that are out of balance, Martin envisions aspects of optimal health as a wheel of intersecting priorities, all of which are essential to true wellness. At the center of this wheel is community, called the most vital indicator of long-term good health and longevity; Martin names it as the key component found among the longest-lived people on Earth. The book also speaks to how the pandemic altered people's ability to access communities, and what that means for general health.

Ultimately, the book does not present "health" as a number on a scale, or in terms of the athletic feats one can accomplish. Instead, health is about a constellation of habits and experiences that build on one another. It springs from the proper consideration of food, lifestyle and movement, sleep, constitution, mindset, and purpose. Each such aspect is outlined in its own chapter, filled with research highlights, commentary from experts, and tips for improvement. For example, the sleep chapter introduces research on how much sleep different individuals might need, offers tips for better sleep, and explores the connection between menopause and sleeping difficulties for women.

The chapters systematically build on each other and come together with thoughtful advice on how their subjects intersect to create a more balanced life. A quiz at the back of the book helps evaluate one's present situation; it is a useful way to check in for improvements over time. Still, the goal isn't perfection; instead, the book's quick overviews impart a basic understanding of the importance of healthy habits, and how they work together to improve one's well-being.

The book's straightforward guidance means that the importance of each spoke on the wheel is made clear; navigating between them is also facilitated. The simple changes suggested in each section represent a place to start in developing that aspect of themselves—techniques like practicing kindness, or trying meditation. The advice is helpful and accessible throughout, and the book's quick overviews of the vital aspects of wellness are keen. The result is an approachable, down-to-earth, holistic method for personal improvement that doesn't require a strict diet, endless exercise, or following a particular spiritual path, because wellness comes as much from knowing one's self as it does from making healthier choices.

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SARAH WHITE (November 2, 2021)

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