

Considerations regarding the relationship between Fitness, Wellness and Healthy Lifestyle

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Abstract

Introduction. Currently, the crises triggered by the pandemic, in the fields of health, freedom of movement, economic, with impact in the social and cultural spheres, bring back today the practical applicability of the concepts of fitness and wellness.

Material and method. In our study we will refer to the effects of the pandemic on health (everyone's well-being), to see how they accentuated the negative effects of the risks that specialists linked to sedentary lifestyle; increased stress; static anti-physiological positions for prolonged periods of time, which result in cardiovascular disease, metabolic syndrome and even cancer, to which is added an irrational diet. We will also refer to the relationship between the quality of life of people and the need to find the most effective ways to combat the negative effects of risk factors, by overcoming the obstacles posed by the financial situation and cultural patterns both in terms of lifestyle, as well as the eating behavior of people from different backgrounds.

Results and discussions. We are of the opinion that specialists must go in their approaches, from the cultural understanding of man, to find ways to individualize the means of intervention so as to achieve the proposed objectives. The framework could be, for children and adolescents - the reorganization of school physical education, and for young people and adults - leisure activities, in which the emphasis could be falls on the concepts of Fitness and Wellness, with a beneficial effect on quality of life and personal satisfaction.

Conclusion In this context, we believe that it is necessary to reconsider the need to make the population aware of the formation of a healthy lifestyle. The means could be physical fitness, wellness, rational nutrition and recovery according to the effort made, their benefits can have a major impact on health and prolong life expectancy.

Keywords: *Fitness, Wellness, Health, Physical education, cultural perspectives,*

INTRODUCTION

Currently, much is discussed about personal well-being, either as a physical condition (or fitness) or as wellness, but in the conditions of the coronavirus pandemic it has been experienced that this type of good cannot be approached by man - social being, than in direct relation and interdependence with the public good. After World War II, scientific discoveries and the progress of medicine had created the possibility of controlling infectious diseases. (1), so that most specialists focused on the non-communicable diseases, determined by the lifestyle of modern societies, that they will be responsible for 70% of deaths worldwide by 2020, according to the WHO (2) estimate. A sedentary lifestyle has developed what specialists call *Sedentary Death Syndrome* (SeDS), which involves a clinical framework of disorders in the body, determined by several factors, which increase mortality (3). It was also determined the need to address - the problem of health as a whole - body, mind and soul (4).

In fact, prior to this period to which we refer, in this study, specialists addressed the issue of quality of life defined, in general, as well-being, both related to the human person and society, manifested by: increasing fitness physical, emotional stability, spiritual maturity,

financial and social security, etc. (5). Both Fitness and Wellness are linked by their meanings, to the concept of health, each of which involves choices for a healthy lifestyle.

Following the evolution of what WHO specialists defined as the Covid pandemic, we find a very high rate of diseases with severe forms, which led in very large proportions - up to 90% to death in some areas, with a prevalence of comorbidities: obesity, diabetes (6) and cardiovascular diseases (7), in increasing the negative effects of those who developed acute respiratory syndrome - SARS-CoV - 2. (8).

In this context, a number of authors resume the discussion on the prevention of diseases that threaten the life of contemporary man, due to the way of life, the specifics of the professions, which have been shown to often involve activities qualified to be sedentary (office work e.g.), as well as the habit of preferring convenience over physical exertion - and we are talking about the modernization of means of travel for example. Prevention, maintenance and / or recovery of optimal health can be achieved in rich Western countries by choosing methods to obtain and maintain fitness / fitness, through an adequate diet, relaxation / meditation,

intellectual activities / learning carried out in friendly environments both in nature / outdoors (outdoor) and in social, which is also related to the concept of leisure that we talked about on other occasions (9).

Material and method.

During the development of our study, we tried to better understand the meanings of the concepts of fitness, wellness and lifestyle, in a broader context, which included other concepts including health. Insisting on the problem of health, we can not only talk about disease prevention but also about the recovery of health, in conditions of diseases and maintaining optimal health. In principle, more and more specialists turn to the holistic perspective, understanding that in fact the physical and spiritual complexity of the human being, makes necessary complex, interdisciplinary approaches. In order to correctly understand these approaches, we believe it is necessary to understand the meanings of the concepts we operate with, and this was the objective of this study.

Concepts and paradigms are sometimes marked by visions such as holistic, relational (10) and positive about the world, ideologies in the social environment, as well as philosophical currents, so we can talk about the existentialist perspective (11) and multidisciplinary (12; 13). If in the beginning health was defined as actually the absence of the disease, now specialists talk about the clear difference between health and disease, showing that someone can be clinically healthy but not well (14), which leads to in fact, an older idea, which belonged to Jerry Lafferty (15), had spoken of a five-element model of the concept of wellness: physical, social, mental, emotional, spiritual, and shared by other specialists (16; 17). Jerrold S. Greenberg (14) adds the idea of mental health to intellectual wellness. To these dimensions will be added, in time, the occupational one, to which (18)

The father of the modern wellness movement is considered to be Halbert Louis Dunn (19, 20, 21), who defined wellness as a balance between individual physical health and the external environment, taking to another level the ideas of Donald B. Ardell (22, 23), which spoke of the health determined by the harmony between body, mind and soul.

Later, Royda Crosse, Donald R. Nicholas, David C. Gobble and Beth Frank (24) will establish the current model of wellness, including as variables: culture (education, training na) age and sex, thus proposing a new dimension - wellness vocational. The latter will be added to the other five dimensions of the concept of wellness: physical, spiritual, emotional, social and intellectual, the concept of personal wellness. These ideas were not really new either, for let us not forget that Bill Hettler (25) spoke a few decades earlier of the six

dimensions of wellness: physical, emotional, spiritual, intellectual, social and occupational.

As a result, the concept of health can be understood from a multidimensional perspective, being a dynamic state, in a continuous evolution, which can be controlled by man, so as to avoid diseases (26), the ideal being the healthy and proactive adult, able, through knowledge and understanding of benefits, to choose a healthy lifestyle (27). Most authors will associate wellness with quality of life, in which the emphasis is on the factors that condition the lifestyle, being added a new dimension - environmental: environmental wellness (28). From this perspective, specialists find a close and interdependent relationship of the concept of wellness with the determinants of quality of life in a positive sense: physical activity determined by physical condition and physical fitness (29).

In postmodern society, health risks are increasing, the alarm has been sounded for two decades by the World Health Organization, which includes: irrational, often deficient diet, iron deficiencies, contaminated water, inadequate health measures. personal hygiene, and polluted air. All this is found in underdeveloped areas, marked by poverty and all its effects and have led to what experts call the epidemic of Noncommunicable Diseases, given that it causes about 71% of deaths worldwide (30).

But at the same time, in societies that promote the consumer economy, the risks that lead to disease are also food, this time irrational (31), in excessive amounts or with excess fat, salt and sugar, sedentary lifestyle, stress and alcohol, tobacco or drug use. The reduction of risks that cause lifestyle diseases associated with workplace stress, such as cardiovascular disease, metabolic syndrome, diabetes, cancer, has concerned a large number of authors, including Briand Luke Seaward (32, 1) and Christiane Jennen and Gerard Uhlenbuck, (33). The first author insists on the negative influence of stress in determining these diseases (34). In the same vein, specialists are increasingly focusing on a means of prevention, treatment and maintenance of health, available to all - a healthy lifestyle.

It is seen as an alternative for the prevention of noncommunicable diseases from the perspective of a relatively new branch - Lifestyle Medicine, introduced in a university environment at Loma Linda, California in 2004 and then at Harvard, in 2007, here appearing the Institute of Style Medicine of life. However, the global Lifestyle Medicine movement will begin with the establishment of a medical-scientific community, through the American College of Lifestyle Medicine, ALMA - the Australian Lifestyle Medicine Community and the European Society of Lifestyle Medicine (35). Moreover, the latest WHO data indicate that one in ten people suffer from a mental illness during their lifetime (36, 37), and the pandemic has worsened.

The idea was born and consolidated that lifestyle is fundamental in obtaining and maintaining an optimal state of health, this including a balanced diet, physical activity (physical condition / fitness) and an adequate recovery. It is integrated in the practice of modern medicine, as a complementary element to therapy, having the effect of reducing the action of risk factors on chronic diseases (35). There are many arguments and we will only mention here that a series of studies have shown that lifestyle can be, for example, the only comprehensive, non-pharmaceutical, effective treatment by reducing body weight, able to control metabolic problems of people suffering from DM2 (Diabetes), ie hyperglycemia, insulin resistance, dyslipoproteinemia and hypertension (38). Speaking of modified lifestyle, specialists refer to therapeutic education, nutrition, exercise and healthy habits (39).

Results and discussions

We find that there have been changes, over time, in health paradigms, specialists redefining this concept from an interrelational perspective (10) or holistic wellness (40). Until now, health was related to the body in which physiological systems were approached in isolation (41). Concern for body image has given rise to several movements and currents, which promote exercise as an important means that can influence both health and quality of life.

Also, regarding the concept of fitness, we notice semantic evolutions, as new models appear and are promoted, some even talking about the fitness style - related to lifestyle and methods to keep the body in excellent physical condition.

We also talked about the concept of fitness on other occasions, when we tried to determine its semantics (42), starting from the perspectives of authors such as: Carl Casperson, Kenneth Powell and Gregory M. Christenson (43), Charles Corbin and Ruth Lindsey (44), Claude Bouchard (45), to H. David Clarke and H. Harrison Clarke (46), who talk about a full and balanced life and Nastas H. Douglas, and Alan C. Lacy (47), which recall the two areas of physical fitness - the one that is correlated with health and the one that is related to abilities / skills (skill).

Physical fitness has been understood as a means of preventing illness, preserving and increasing professional capacity, optimizing the body's motor skills, well-being of the person, recreation / relaxation, self-realization, socialization, etc. The multiple meanings make it difficult to determine the exact ends, depending on different situations, health, value systems (good, beauty) and other criteria.

Scientifically, the Toronto Model was created (45), which is based on the idea that the basis for health are the components of physical fitness (Health Related Fitness),

physical activity being considered a *conditio sine qua non*. (48)

As for the concept of lifestyle, it is defined by the authors as a daily way of life, which helps man to improve the body's energy reserves and stay healthy, begins to undergo changes, involving evolutions towards new behavioral habits and as well as various preferences for what can be generally defined as appropriate physical activity.

Understanding the importance of lifestyle, some experts have tried to find the best ways to raise awareness of the benefits of a healthy lifestyle, as well as the most effective tools to determine health and wellness (28). These authors, starting from the request made to the University of Arizona by Canyon Ranch - a private commercial organization (49), for a program designed and implemented for its customers, speak of the theoretical model promoted by it - Total Personal Concept (TPC) , which made some people remember holistic medicine (50).

Ralph F. Renger and colleagues (28), starting from the complexity of the human being, argued that it should be viewed from every possible perspective (intellectual, emotional, social, spiritual and physical). At the same time, they defined wellness as the optimal state of well-being that an individual is able to achieve, given a set of circumstances. For them it is important first of all to know how to develop skills and abilities in specific areas of wellness, then the desire to improve their quality of life, and the recommendations were for people to take care of their physical appearance, to use in constructively the mind, to channel their energy positively, to express their emotions, to be creative in their realities with others, to be attentive to spiritual needs and to interact with their environment. (28)

The ideas are not really new, but the authors manage to synthesize the beliefs of the time in the field of Melvin J. Witmer and Thomas J. Sweeney (12) and will inspire the authors of the later period, including John W. Travis and Regina Sara Ryan (51), David J. Anspaugh, Michael H. Hamrick, and Frank D. Rosato (52), Dianne Hales (53), Gordon Miller, and Leslie T. Foster (54). It is interesting to believe the holistic perspective of Dianne Hales (53), who speaking of wellness, defines it as the sum of the absence of negative elements (illness and disease) and the presence of positive elements (physical health and happiness).

An important role in these approaches undoubtedly belongs to physical activity, which has beneficial effects on physical condition and implicitly on the ability to perform this type of activity. (55), As for the optimal level of physical condition, it is reached when man can safely and efficiently perform daily tasks, as well as those that occur along the way, without reaching an energy deficit for the activities of leisure, recreational (56; 57)

Conclusion

Given all this, we believe that specialists (theorists in physical education and sports, doctors, sociologists, etc.) must go in their efforts, from the understanding of man from a cultural point of view (values, moral norms that are on the basis of conceptions, individual or group mentality), in order to find ways to individualize the means of intervention, so as to achieve the proposed objectives. The framework could be, for children and adolescents - the reorganization of the school physical education activity, with a greater number of hours for physical activity and an adapted program, and for young people and adults - leisure activities, in which the emphasis could be falls on the concepts of Fitness and Wellness, with a beneficial effect on quality of life and personal satisfaction.

In this context, we believe that it is necessary to reconsider the need to make the population aware of the formation of a healthy lifestyle, which involves giving up habits and choices that are risk factors and adopting protective factors, not only at the individual level but also at the social level. The means could be physical fitness, wellness, rational nutrition and recovery according to the effort, their benefits can have a major impact on health and prolong life expectancy. We believe that the conditions are favorable, as more and more young people and adults have become aware of the importance of exercising, restoring and adopting a balanced diet, in order to ensure and maintain optimal health and adequate muscle tone.

In addition, education can promote a healthy lifestyle, and such approaches have already emerged, and the imposition of the concepts of wellness and wellbeing, along with fitness and nutrition, when we talk about lifestyle are evidence of changes that occur in the paradigms of health, which is recognized as a value in modern society. And in time, probably, a healthy lifestyle will be able to offer a greater capacity to the human body to defend itself in the perspective of new, unwanted, but possible epidemiological challenges.

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