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Wellness Leaders: Creating Healthier and More Productive Environments at Home and Work

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The culture-based approach has a thirty-year track record of delivering outstanding results.

- Productivity increased 200%
- Worker income tripled
- Turnover dropped by 25%
- Racism was overcome

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A Wellness Culture Means that Social Networks Support Healthy Lifestyles

For better and for worse health behaviors spread from person to person. The behaviors investigated so far are:

- Healthy Eating
- Smoking
- Physical Activity
- Alcohol Abuse
- Happiness

Source: Framingham Heart Health Study 1971 – 2007 of 4,439 friends, family and neighbors sited in *Connected: The Surprising Power of Our Social Networks and How They Shape Our Lives* by Nicholas A. Christakis and James H. Fowler, New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2009.

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Culture and Leadership Findings

Of 303 organizations that completed the U.S. based Health Management Research Organization's Scorecard by June of 2010, just 25% reported that their senior leadership and culture were "very supportive" of their employee health management strategy.

- 66% of organizations with strong leadership and cultural support reported improvements in health behavior, compared with only 26% of organizations with little or no support.
- 50% of organizations with strong leadership and cultural support reported a net positive impact on medical trend, versus only 14% of organizations with little or no support.

See www.the-hero.org for further information

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A Culture of Wellness Culture Makes Health and Safety Programs Work

- A culture reaches the hard to reach
- A culture of health maintains healthy behavior
- A culture of health increases lifestyle change success

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Each year, the vast majority of people attempt health improvement goals. Few succeed.

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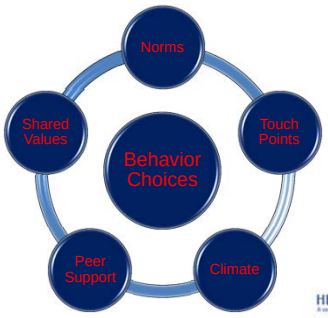
Cultivating Healthy Behavior



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Cultural Values

In a wellness culture wellness is a top-tier priority.

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Community Wellness Value Proposition

- Saving lives and reducing illness
- Controlling health care costs
- Making Vermont more attractive to employers
- Adding perceived value to Vermont products (such as agriculture and tourism)
- Having more fun together
- Caring for the health of our children
- Staying true to our history of being a strong and caring community

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Employer Wellness Value Proposition

- Reduce Health Risks
- Control Illness Care/Costs
- Heal
- Deliver Peak Performance
- Provide Opportunities to Assist
- Enhance Teamwork/Morale
- Look Good/Improve Image

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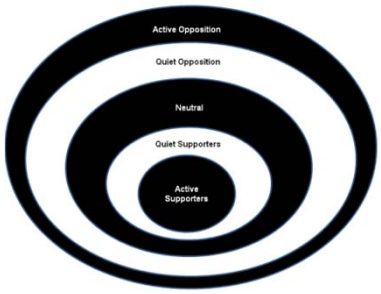
Attitudes Towards Wellness



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Cultural Norms

In a wellness culture healthy lifestyles are "the way we do things around here."

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Cultural Touch Points

In a wellness culture formal and informal policies and procedures make the healthy choice the easy choice.

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Cultural Touch Points

1. Modeling
2. Rewards and Recognition
3. Push-back
4. Recruitment and Selection
5. First Impressions and Orientation
6. Learning and Training
7. Traditions and Symbols
8. Communication
9. Relationship Development
10. Resource Commitment

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Free Transportation

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A Real Break

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A Farmer's Market at the Worksite

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Wellness Norms

Be physically active	Eat a healthy diet	Not smoke
Avoid alcohol and other drug abuse	Use preventive medicine	Socialize with friends and family
Sleep at least 7 hours per day	Practice stress management	Maintain a healthy weight

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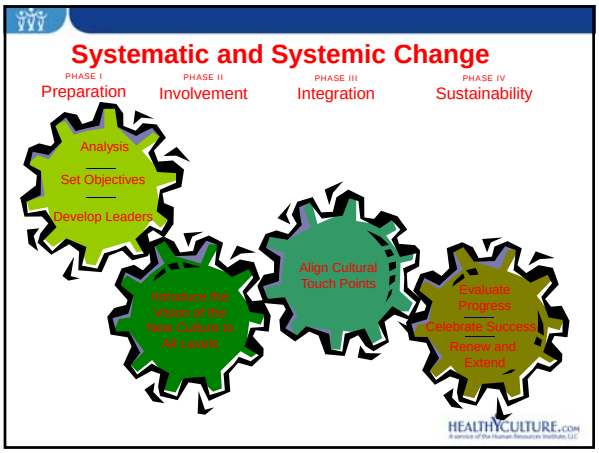

Peer Support

In a wellness culture people effectively support each other in achieving their lifestyle goals.

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Wellness Programs that Foster Peer Support

- Team sports
- Support groups
- Group participation games and challenges
- Wellness mentor, peer support and wellness buddy initiatives
- Open enrollment to family members, housemates and/or friends
- Educational content and self-help programs that recommend peer involvement

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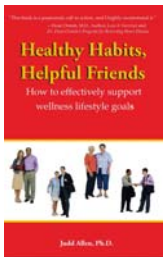
Peer Support Skills for Health

Help with…



- Establishing Trust
- Setting Goals
- Identifying Role Models
- Eliminating Barriers to Change
- Locating Supportive Environments
- Working Through Relapse
- Celebrating Success

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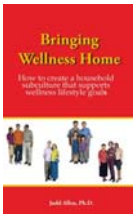
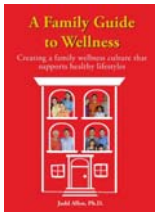
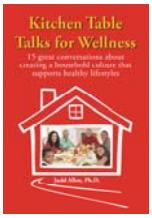
Supporting Household Wellness Champions







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Cultural Climate

In a wellness culture people work and play well together.

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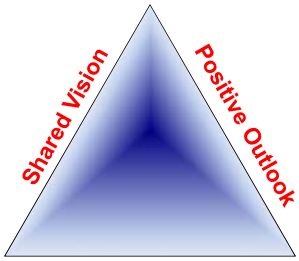
Climate



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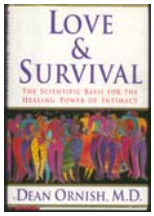
A Wellness Culture Strengthens Relationships

Our social connections are important in addressing morbidity, mortality, recovery from illness and quality of life.



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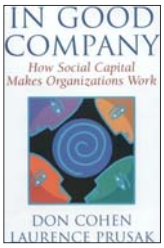
A Wellness Culture Enhances Social Capital

Good relationships enhance business outcomes by:

- Increasing knowledge sharing
- Increasing thoughtful action
- Lowering transaction costs
- Lowering employment costs



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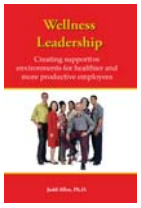
Leadership Skills for Creating a Wellness Culture



- Share the wellness vision
- Serve as role models
- Align cultural touch points
- Monitor progress and celebrate success

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Sharing the Wellness Vision

Our Elevator Pitch:

- What is wellness
- Why is it important
- How to participate

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Become an Effective Role Model

- ✓ **Adopt a healthier lifestyle**
- ✓ **Make positive practices visible**
- ✓ **Participate in wellness activities**
- ✓ **Reduce the impact of poor modeling and attitudes**

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Align Formal and Informal Policies and Procedures

1. Modeling
2. Rewards and Recognition
3. Push-back
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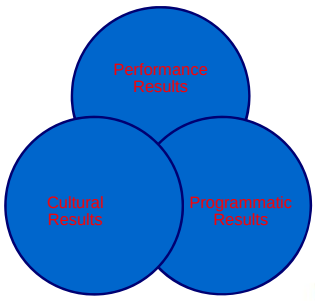
Track and Celebrate Wellness



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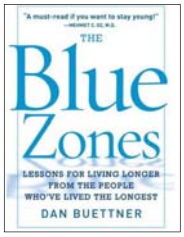
Together We Can Create Our Own Wellness Zone

There are places where people live happier, healthier and longer lives:

- In Sardinia, Italy
- In Okinawa, Japan
- In Loma Linda, USA
- In Nicoya, Costa Rica
- Ikaria, Greece



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