DREAM BIG:
THE GUSTIE GUIDE
TO ENHANCING WELLBEING
Welcome!

We’re thrilled you’re interested in enhancing your wellbeing. There’s never been a better time to invest in you.

If you are like most Gusties, you probably lead an active life and look forward to a future filled with opportunity. But you likely also sacrifice your wellbeing by participating in a range of social activities, working to pay tuition, and “pulling all-nighters” with the hope of getting better grades. While some wellbeing outcomes cannot be avoided (e.g., grief associated with loss), many wellbeing issues are the result of the daily decisions you make about your lifestyle. By reducing your unhealthy choices (e.g., using alcohol to relax) and by increasing your healthy choices (e.g., using time management techniques), you can feel better, manage stress more effectively, perform better in school, improve at extra-curricular activities, and increase your clarity about what matters most.

It’s never too early to establish behaviors that support your wellbeing. In fact, many of the behaviors you establish during your college years will stay with you for the next few decades. That’s why enhancing your wellbeing is a key ingredient to making your life count.

Whether you’re new to the topic of wellbeing or already well down the path to flourishing, this guide can help you live your best life and use your gifts to make the world a better place. The resources on the following pages can help guide you on your journey—a journey that you can be proud of and that provides you the insights and tools to achieve your goals.

When you invest in your wellbeing, you’re not only helping yourself, but you’re also helping the Gustavus community meet the challenges of a world in need.

In joy and health,

The Wellbeing Team
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The Gustavus Wellbeing Initiative connects people with ideas, information, and inspiration to support the wellbeing of all. Wellbeing is a state of experiencing meaning, positive emotions, engagement, health, supportive relationships, and accomplishment to flourish in our own lives and in the world. Our work aligns with the College’s values of excellence, community, justice, service, and faith to change the world for the better. When we live well, we lead and serve well.

**Vision**

The Gustavus community thrives with **purpose, connection, and vitality** to meet the challenges of a world in need.

**Mission**

The Wellbeing Initiative promotes optimal living through education, research, and engagement programs that support personal discovery, holistic health, and lifelong learning.

**Learn more/request presentation:** gustavus.edu/wellbeing

**Questions:** wellbeing@gustavus.edu
The process of creating patterned drawings by combining repetitive marks, circles, lines, and forms to create small pieces of art is a great way to clear your mind, and let yourself become more focused and relaxed. It’s also an approachable and easy-to-learn art form that anyone can try, regardless of skill level. There’s no right or wrong way to do it, and it’s a great way to let go and enjoy the emotional benefits that art can bring.

Use this exercise at any point as you progress through this tool. Draw here on this page, along the paper edges, or anywhere that works for you. Use any materials: pen, pencil, marker, crayon, paint, or even with a stick in the sand. Let yourself relax in the moment to center yourself.

If you need a little inspiration to get started, try some of these patterns—meditation drawing is easier than you think!

![Meditation Drawing Patterns](image-url)
“What shape waits within the seed of you to grow and spread its branches against a future sky?”

-David Whyte,
What to Remember When Waking

As you consider your own wellbeing, what is the “seed of you” that wants to “grow and spread its branches against a future sky?”

Enhancing your wellbeing is an art and a science. To live your dreams, there are clear steps to set yourself up for success. First, know your highest wish; then, articulate an incredibly inspiring, super personal vision for your wellbeing.

Helpful hints for creating your vision:

1. Use first person, present tense language, saying “I am feeling energized,” instead of “I will feel energized.” Write as if you are already experiencing this vision right now. The active, present tense engages your brain into action mode.

2. Give yourself goosebumps. Make it exciting and juicy with sensory detail, and avoid clichés (“I feel like a million bucks!”) that make it too general. Include emotions and actions, be descriptive, and paint a picture in narrative structure to tell the story of your life. What do you look like? How do you feel? How do you express yourself? Describe your self-talk, interactions, relationships, work, and more.

3. Avoid extremes like “I always” or “I never,” or “all the time” or “perfect.” They are unrealistic. Express realistic, achievable goals or growth opportunities.

4. Use positive language that reflects your values and write from a place of love. Focus on what you do want and avoid listing what you don’t want.

All you have to do is write it. You can always change it, and you most likely will over the years. If you want to share it with a friend or family member, wonderful! But it can be yours alone.

“Think about your life in the future. Imagine that everything has gone as well as it possibly could. You have worked hard and succeeded at accomplishing all of your life goals. Think of this as the realization of all your life dreams. Now, write about what you imagined.”

(Laura King, 2001)
Good news: you possess the ability to enhance your wellbeing. Think of your wellbeing as a unique, ever-changing, interconnected set of skills that are developed through practice and small steps in exploring what you really need. When you tune into what you need, you naturally seek a clearer purpose, deeper connections, and enhanced vitality—the pillars of wellbeing.

**Purpose**

*Purpose is the unifying principle that gives meaning to our daily lives. Your purpose—whether related to your job, your vocation, or your spirituality—guides your life decisions, influences your goals and behaviors, and offers direction to achieve meaning.*

Your purpose sits in the intersection of your talents, skills/expertise, passions, and values (see following list). Reflect on the questions below to gain deeper insight into what you can offer the world.

1. What makes you come alive?

2. What are your innate strengths?

3. Where do you add the greatest value?

4. How will you measure your life?
Connection

*Connection is the state of experiencing healthy and affirming relationships. Your sense of connection—with a higher power, the environment, other people, and intellectual pursuits—enhances your self-worth, increases your feelings of security, and fosters a greater sense of belonging.*

There are three core dimensions of connectedness linked to wellbeing that people of all ages can focus on to improve a sense of connection. Reflect on the dimensions below to explore your connectedness.

1. **Intimate Connectedness:** Who in your life affirms who you are?

2. **Relational Connectedness:** Which face-to-face contacts are mutually rewarding?

3. **Collective Connectedness:** What groups or collective experiences do you enjoy?
Vitality

Vitality is the capacity for energetic, growth-filled living. Your vitality—physical, emotional, social, and economic in nature—helps you pursue your dreams, achieve your goals, and make a bigger impact in the world.

Maximizing your physical, emotional, economic, and social vitality will lead to a full, satisfying, and impactful life. Reflect on the questions below to explore your vitality.

1. How do you use food and exercise to nourish your energy and focus?

2. What tools can you use to manage your stress more effectively?

3. What quality of sleep are you getting each night?

4. What resources do you seek to enhance your financial wellbeing?
“Your beliefs become your thoughts. Your thoughts become your words. Your words become your actions. Your actions become your habits. Your habits become your values. Your values become your destiny.” —Mahatma Ghandi

Your personal values define who you are and who you want to be. When you identify your values, you discover what’s important to you. When you know your values, you can use them to make decisions about how to live your life—to make the best choice in any situation.

Some of life’s key decisions are really about determining what you value most. When many options seem reasonable, it’s helpful and comforting to rely on your values to point you in the right direction.

As your life evolves, so do your personal values—this is why keeping in touch with your values is a lifelong exercise. You are encouraged to continuously revisit them, especially if you start to feel unbalanced... and you can’t quite figure out why.

Use the following seven-step process (informed by your school, work, and other experiences) to identify your personal values. This process requires focused time and thought. Consider doing it with someone you trust to get honest feedback. It may require several discussions over weeks or even months. Your values may adjust and develop over time just as you do, so embrace the change.

**Step 1:** Think through and describe the following in detail (i.e., what you were doing, whom you were with, other contributing factors)

1. What have been your three greatest accomplishments?

2. What have been your three greatest moments of efficiency?
3. What have been your three greatest moments of joy?

4. How and why did these experiences give your life meaning?

5. What common themes, desires, or rules can you identify?

**Step 2:** Think through and describe the following in detail (i.e., what you were doing, whom you were with, other contributing factors)

1. What have been your three greatest failures?

2. What have been your three greatest moments of inefficiency?
3. What have been your three greatest moments of despair?

4. What common themes, desires, or rules can you identify?

**Step 3:** Identify three or four brief sentences of advice you would give to yourself based upon these commonalities.

**Step 4:** Next reduce them to a few words. For example: If your advice is: “Don’t overindulge in food and booze at parties and get in trouble,” reduce that down to “Keep Control Through Moderation,” or even just “Moderation.”
Step 5: Determine your top values, based on your experiences

1. Why is each experience truly important and memorable?

2. Use the following list of common personal values to help you get started—aim for 10 values. As you work through the list, circle those that resonate with you. Then combine values that are aligned. For example, if you value philanthropy, community, and generosity, you might say that service is a top value. (If needed, see page 23 for value definitions.)

- Authenticity
- Integrity
- Self Respect
- Honesty
- Trust
- Nature
- Leisure
- Adventure
- Physical Fitness
- Competition
- Perseverance
- Challenge
- Innovation
- Creativity
- Artistic Expression
- Aesthetics
- Tolerance
- Fairness
- Equity
- Balance
- Justice
- Peace
- Learning
- Personal Development
- Advancement
- Excellence
- Responsibility
- Loyalty
- Independence
- Tradition
- Family
- Faith
- Fun
- Happiness
- Community
- Location
- Service
- Compassion
- Cooperation
- Flexibility
- Competency
- Efficiency
- Focus
- Accuracy
- Generosity
- Contribution
- Financial Security
- Prestige
- Recognition
- Security
- Stability
- Control
- Conformity
- Leadership

Add your own:

________________
________________
________________
3. Write down your top 10 values in no particular order.

1. ______________________________________
2. ______________________________________
3. ______________________________________
4. ______________________________________
5. ______________________________________
6. ______________________________________
7. ______________________________________
8. ______________________________________
9. ______________________________________
10. ______________________________________

4. Look at the first two values and ask yourself, “If I could satisfy only one of these, which would I choose?” It might help to visualize a situation in which you would have to make that choice. For example, if you compare the values of service and stability, imagine that you must decide whether to foreign aid work after graduation or get a corporate job to ensure you are saving money and paying off your school loans at an accelerated pace.

5. Keep working through the list, by comparing each value with each other value, until your list is narrowed to five values and they are in the correct order.

**Step 6:** Now comes the fun: testing your values. Think of a situation where following your value hurts you rather than helps you. For example you might think “innovation” sounds good until you realize that your life thrives on stability rather than constant change. You have to think it through carefully. If you can’t identify a legitimate case where the value steers you wrong, you probably have identified the right value.
Step 7: Reaffirm your values
Check your top values and make sure they fit with your vision for wellbeing.

1. Write down your top five values in order.

1. ________________________________
2. ________________________________
3. ________________________________
4. ________________________________
5. ________________________________

2. Do these values make you feel good about yourself?

3. Are you proud of them?

4. Would you be comfortable and proud to tell your values to people you respect and admire?

5. Do these values represent what you would support, even if your choice isn’t popular, and it puts you in the minority?

When you consider your values, you can approach decisions with confidence and clarity that you’re doing what is best for your current and future happiness.
The Wellbeing Initiative promotes lives of purpose, connection, and vitality through nine wellbeing dimensions. These interconnected and interdependent dimensions are expressed at the individual, interpersonal, organizational, and community levels. Read through these dimensions and refer to them as you map your wellbeing and set goals on the following pages.

**Spiritual** Wellbeing is the discovery and celebration of the deeper meaning and Divine Reality in life. It includes the exploration of the values, beliefs, practices, and connections that provide meaning and direction for your life as well as a respect for the spiritual path of others.

**Emotional** Wellbeing is acknowledging, managing, and expressing your feelings. It includes pursuing a clear view of the world as it is, finding your place in it, and recognizing challenge, risk, and conflict as opportunities for emotional growth.

**Relational** Wellbeing is the ability to engage effectively with the surrounding communities by developing positive relationships, respect for others, multicultural competences, and concern for community welfare.

**Physical** Wellbeing is taking care of your body and striving towards your physical potential, while recognizing and respecting limitations.

**Financial** Wellbeing is the ability to make educated, values-based decisions to achieve confidence and security with your financial situation.

**Intellectual** Wellbeing is having the tools, awareness, motivation, and capability to integrate learning into your everyday life. Learning to be curious, skeptical and fair-minded are essential qualities of an individual who has intellectual wellbeing.

**Environmental** Wellbeing means living as an integral part of an environment that supports physical, mental, and social wellbeing, while at the same time living consciously to maintain and improve a healthy environment.

**Vocational** Wellbeing is the intentional, life-giving alignment of who you are, what you do, and what the world needs.

**Career** Wellbeing is having the clarity, confidence, and connections to use your strengths to daily engage in meaningful and purposeful work.
How is YOUR Wellbeing?
In the map above, please rank (1-10) your level of satisfaction with your current wellbeing state.

10 = I am doing fantastic! Couldn’t be doing any better!
5 = I am just getting by right now. Not too good but things could be better or worse.
1 = I am unhealthy, in pain, very low energy, depressed, lonely, low hope.
Congratulations! You’ve mapped your wellbeing. What observations can you make about where you are?

**FINANCIAL WELLBEING** Observations:  
(pay bills on time, budgeting, credit cards)

**ENVIRONMENTAL WELLBEING** Observations:  
(maintain cleanliness, recycle, carbon footprint)

**RELATIONAL WELLBEING** Observations:  
(acceptance of others, social time, alone time)

**SPIRITUAL WELLBEING** Observations:  
(meditation, peace in the world, live values)

**PHYSICAL WELLBEING** Observations:  
(sleep, chemical and sexual health, fitness)

**VOCATIONAL WELLBEING** Observations:  
(purpose, service, fulfillment, use of skills)

**INTELLECTUAL WELLBEING** Observations:  
(stimulating activities, new concepts, seek help)

**CAREER WELLBEING** Observations:  
(work engagement, career plan, success)

**EMOTIONAL WELLBEING** Observations:  
(sense of self, emotion awareness, empathy)

**ADDITIONAL OBSERVATIONS**
SET YOUR WELLBEING GOALS

Now that you’ve identified areas of opportunity, it’s time to create a realistic goal and plan for your success. Use the following template for each goal you set. Come back and redo the assessments and goals whenever you want to refine or redirect your efforts.

Get started by choosing an aspect of your wellbeing where you most want to make improvements. Simply making the decision to improve or enhance your life is a breakthrough—and any small effort begins the process of change.

Goal: ________________________________________________
____________________________________________________

Beginning: Where are you now? _________________________
___________________________________________________
__________________________________________________

End Result: Where do you want to be? ________________
_________________________________________________
________________________________________________

Challenges: What is the priority? _____________________
_______________________________________________
________________________________________________

Action Steps: How will you get there? __________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________

Timeline: How will you know? _________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________

Support System: Who will help you? __________________________________________________

Celebrate: How can you celebrate during the journey? ____________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________

Doublecheck - Is my goal SMART?
☐ S – Specific (or Significant)
☐ M – Measurable (or Meaningful)
☐ A – Attainable (or Actionable)
☐ R – Relevant (or Rewarding)
☐ T – Time-bound (or Trackable)

SMART Goal Example:
I will train and run a 10K in 60 minutes during the next 16 weeks.
(S) I will run a 10K
(M) I will try to run it in 60 minutes
(A) I have 16 weeks to train
(R) This goal fuels my desire to run and be fit
(T) I will track my progress daily
Hooray! Your (S.M.A.R.T.) goal is set. Now it’s time to create a system for success using the six sources of influence for change. To increase your likelihood of success tenfold (!), capitalize on four or more of the following (based on the research of behavior change experts at VitalSmarts). Here is a great way to think about the six sources of influence:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source 1: <strong>Personal Motivation</strong></th>
<th>Source 2: <strong>Personal Ability</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Whether you want to do it.</td>
<td>Whether you can do it.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source 3: <strong>Social Motivation</strong></th>
<th>Source 4: <strong>Social Ability</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Whether other people encourage the right behaviors.</td>
<td>Whether other people provide help, information, or resources.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source 5: <strong>Structural Motivation</strong></th>
<th>Source 6: <strong>Structural Ability</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Whether the environment encourages the right behaviors.</td>
<td>Whether the environment supports the right behaviors.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**MOTIVATION**

**Want: Make the Undesirable Desirable**
1. Use Value Words
2. Create a Personal Motivation Statement
3. Tell the Whole Vivid Story
4. Visit Your Default Future
5. Make It a Game

**ABILITY**

**Can: Surpass Limits with Knowledge, Skills, and Strength**
1. Start with a Knowledge/Skill Scan
2. Employ Deliberate Practice
3. Anticipate the Toughest Challenges You’ll Face

**PERSONAL**

**Cheer: Harness Peer Pressure**
1. Seek Those Who Encourage the Right Behavior/Encourage the Wrong Behavior
2. Seek Those Who Model the Right Behavior at the Right Time
3. Redefine Normal

**SOCIAL**

**Coach: Create Social Support**
1. Align with Allies
2. Avoid the Unwilling

**STRUCTURAL**

**Reward: Design Accountability and Rewards**
1. Use Rewards and Threats of Losing Rewards (losses are twice as powerful, psychologically, as gains)
2. Link Rewards to Vital Behaviors
3. Use Incentives in Moderation for Early Small Wins

**Environment: Create Bridges and Barriers**
1. Build Fences
2. Manage Distance
3. Change Cues
4. Set your Cruise Control
Use the following checklist to increase your capacity for success.

**Self-Efficacy Checklist:**
- My goal is clear
- I have resources I need
- I have tools that work
- I am effective
- My efforts have positive impact

**MY SYSTEM FOR SUCCESS**
Now it’s time to personalize your system to create your path to success.
Value Definitions

**Accuracy**—being correct in attention to detail

**Advancement**—striving to move ahead rapidly, gaining opportunities for growth or seniority

**Adventue**—seeking new and exciting challenges which may include taking risks

**Aesthetics**—appreciating what is beautiful

**Artistic Expression**—expressing self through the arts—painting, drama, literature, etc.

**Authenticity**—ongoing desire to honestly and sincerely express who one is

**Balance**—giving proper attention to each area of one’s life; cultivating a state of equilibrium and steadiness

**Challenge**—attracted to new problems, difficult tasks

**Community**—relational connection and responsibility toward promoting the welfare of others

**Compassion**—concern for, and a desire to help the suffering of others

**Competency**—wanting to meet or exceed standards or expectations

**Competition**—matching effort or abilities with self or others

**Conformity**—preferring to be like others, not standing out

**Contribution**—giving or making a difference for others

**Control**—being in charge or wanting to have influence over outcomes

**Cooperation**—striving for congenial relationships and teamwork

**Creativity**—being imaginative and innovative, going outside the norm

**Efficiency**—working to accomplish tasks in comparatively little time

**Equity**—eliminating barriers that prevent the full participation of all

**Excellence**—commitment to pursuing the highest standards, being exceptional, mastery

**Fairness**—giving everyone an equal chance

**Faith**—religious beliefs, sacred matters, spirituality, meaning in life

**Family**—placing importance on maintaining familial relationships

**Financial Security**—being free from financial worries

**Flexibility**—adapting easily to change and surprise

**Focus**—one pointed attention, minimizing distractions and directing attention to one thing

**Fun**—enjoyment, playful, exuberant activity

**Generosity**—giving readily or liberally

**Happiness**—finding joy, satisfaction, personal wellbeing

**Honesty**—truthfulness, sincerity, and/or frankness

**Independence**—wanting control over own time, behavior, and tasks

**Innovation**—pushing the envelope, creativity, originality, thinking and living outside the box

**Integrity**—maintaining congruity between what one claims to be and how one acts

**Justice**—fairness, moral rightness, respect for the welfare and dignity of others

**Leadership**—authentic self-expression that creates value for others

**Learning**—acquiring new or modifying existing knowledge, behavior, and skills; synthesizing information

**Leisure**—appreciating unstructured or unscheduled time

**Location**—preferring a place, neighborhood, city/town or area of the country or world, that matches lifestyle

**Loyalty**—seeking to be faithful, constant and steadfast

**Nature**—finding joy and renewal in the out-of-doors

**Peace**—desiring tranquility, serenity, lack of discord

**Perseverance**—sustaining momentum, having fortitude

**Personal Development**—wanting to use one’s potential and grow to the fullest

**Physical Fitness**—healthy regard for one’s body, enjoying movement, exercise, working out

**Prestige**—having/showing success, rank, wealth, or status

**Recognition**—desiring the respect of others or credit for one’s achievements

**Responsibility**—being accountable for outcomes, actions, and behavior

**Security**—feeling safe and confident about the future

**Self Respect**—holding oneself in esteem and believing that one is worthy of being treated well

**Service**—helping others through the expression of our gifts and talents, self-less contribution

**Stability**—maintaining continuity, consistency, and predictability over a period of time

**Tolerance**—accepting and/or remaining open to the viewpoints and perspective of others

**Tradition**—treasuring customs and links with the past

**Trust**—reliability, sincerity, and competency
THE FIRST STEP TOWARDS GETTING SOMEWHERE IS TO DECIDE THAT YOU ARE NOT GOING TO STAY WHERE YOU ARE.