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WELLBEING ARTICLE 01

ENGINEERED WELLBEING: PART 1 - THE STRUCTURE OF WELLBEING

You hear and see the words 'wellbeing' plastered everywhere, but what does that actually mean to an engineer? Is wellbeing vitally important or just another drop of data in a vast sea of information? Afterall, shouldn't wellbeing actually be spelt well-being and surely, it's more about wellness?

INTRODUCTION

I'm both an engineer and wellbeing specialist, and because I stand in two camps simultaneously, I get to view life from differing perspectives. As a result, I often find my steel toecaps stumbling across something that has the power to make a real difference for engineers like you and me. If you're willing to invest a couple of minutes and read this article, I'll be able to share a basic structure of wellbeing with you. Then you can decide whether wellbeing's important to you, your life and career.



TRUTH & USE

Most engineers already know that Newtonian physics is limited in use and effectively superseded by the development of quantum physics. Despite this 'truth', the vast majority of engineers use Newtonian physics as the basis of everyday calculations. Why? Because it's simple, useful and meets our needs. Truth's important and sometimes vital however, within the context of wellbeing, it's better to ask yourself 'is this information helpful?'

WHAT'S WELLBEING?

With above in mind, I won't offer you countless definitions of what wellbeing could mean or attempt to uncover a unifying truth within a forest of ever-changing perspectives. Instead, I suggest we consider wellbeing pragmatically and define it as;

A state of experiencing satisfaction and contentment with life & health

Unlike protective hard hats, one size doesn't fit all when it comes to your sense of wellbeing. That's because it's personal in nature and more about how you feel and relate to life and health in general.

STRUCTURE OF WELLBEING

As mentioned earlier, I think it's a good idea to keep things simple where possible, and I believe the basic structure of wellbeing is best kept simple too;



Figure 1.1 – Basic Structure of Health & Wellbeing

As seen in the illustration above, a state or experience of health & wellbeing is constructed from your sense of Physical Wellness (component 1), Psychological Wellness (component 2) that's bound together by Purpose & Meaning, component 3.

WHAT'S WELLNESS?

Wellness is a subjective measure of your experience, in relation to a specific aspect, in the current moment. Within the context of this article, wellness can be expressed as;

How you feel about your body or mind, in the current moment

Despite the subjective and personal nature of wellbeing and wellness, there are a number of common areas worth exploring in forthcoming articles. That's because small shifts in key areas of your life have the power to yield large and surprisingly helpful results in your career and personal life.

WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?

Your sense of health & wellbeing improves when you invest a little time in your wellness, and so does your ability to work effectively. In fact, there are countless studies that indicate wellbeing's directly proportional to;

- Increased productivity
- Increased efficiency & performance
- Increased creativity
- Better social interactions
- Higher self-esteem

In addition, a state of wellbeing is shown to:

- Improve immune system response
- Increase levels of pain tolerance
- Increase longevity
- Improve cardiovascular health
- Reduce the risk of mental illness
- Slow the progression of existing disease



SUMMARY

You can't separate your long-term productivity, efficiency and performance in life from your sense of wellbeing. The same is true about your physical and psychological wellness; your mind affects your body, and your body affects your mind. Everything is inter-related just like ohm's law. When there's too much resistance (body and mind) you're required to increase your voltage (effort levels) in order to do the same amount of work.

In forthcoming articles, I'll be highlighting factors that contribute to physical and psychological wellness, and explaining why it's important to know such detail. Once these foundations are laid, we can begin uncovering a range of techniques and insights that will support your wellbeing and engineering career.

If you've found this article helpful and would like to discuss it further, please contact us on hello@myfoothold.org or call on +44 (0)20 7344 5498



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