Children's Mental Health Summit:
Self-Care for Mental Health Professionals

Dr. Brett K. Gleason

Workshop Objectives
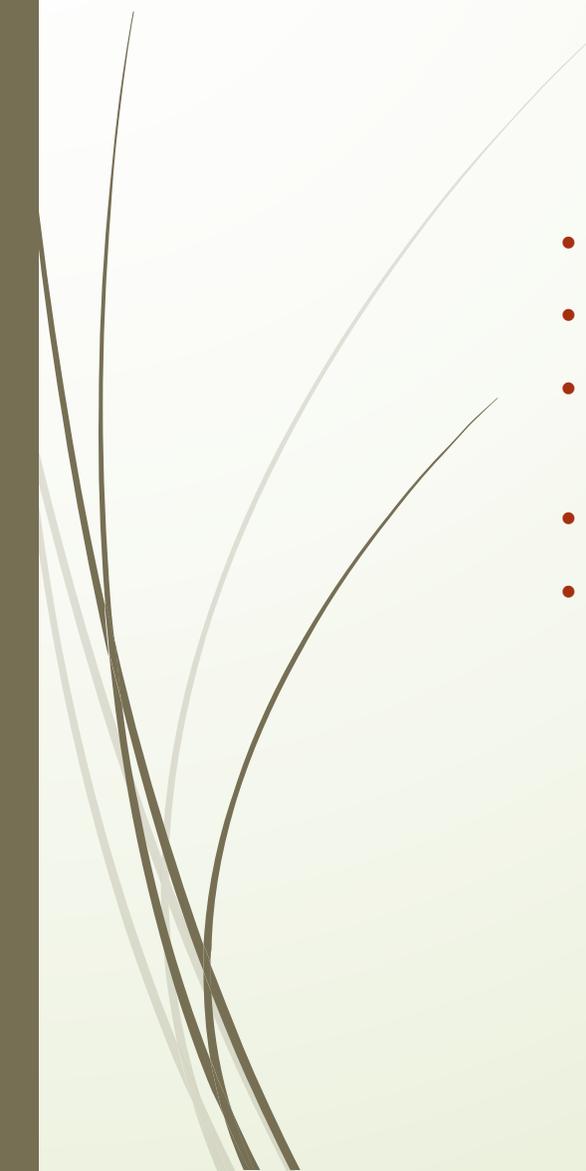
- Discuss societal and personal views of wellness and self-care
- Explore hindrances to wellness and the impact of lack of self-care
- Examine the importance of wellness and self-care both globally and in the helping fields
- Reflect on past personal wellness and self-care practices
- Learn new wellness and self-care habits and how to apply them to your everyday life

Perspectives of Wellness Discussion

- What comes to your mind when you hear "wellness?" "self-care?"

- What lessons or messages have you been exposed to in regard to wellness and self-care in your upbringing? present-day?

- What products and/or activities do you associate with wellness or self-care?

- What comes to mind when you hear "burnout?"

Your Wellness
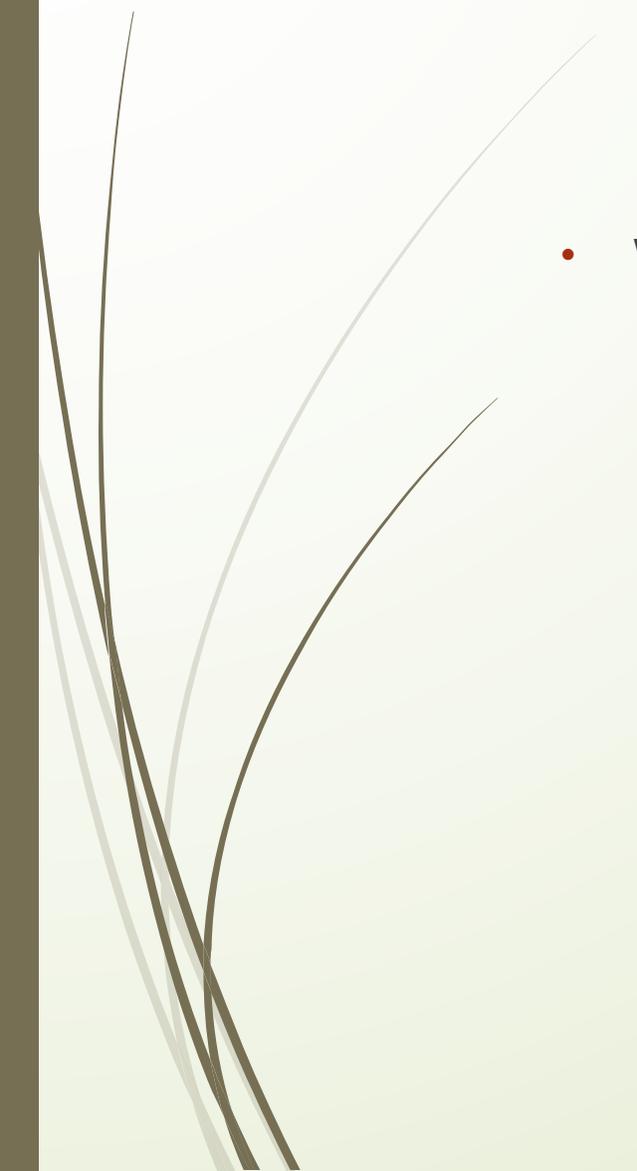
- What does wellness look like to you?
  - When are you at your "best?"
  - How do you feel?
  - Is it in your control?

Burnout, Compassion Fatigue, and Vicarious Traumatization

- Before we focus in on wellness, we need to see what we are fighting

  - Burnout – Related to the working conditions – social conflict, work overload, lack of time, lack of resources

    - Three dimensions of burnout – cynicism, sense of inefficacy, exhaustion (Maslach, 2003)

  - Compassion Fatigue – Related to work with clients/recipients of care

    - A desensitization to client concerns due to the overwhelming nature of client hardships

  - Vicarious Traumatization – Results from indirect exposure to trauma

    - Personal cognitive reaction to the client's experience (Erford, 2018)

    - Worldview and beliefs are shifted in response to exposure to client trauma (Newell & MacNeil, 2010)

What is Wellness?

- "A culturally defined state of being in which mind, body, and spirit are integrated in a way that enables a person to live a fulfilled life" (Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs, 2009, p. 63)

- *"Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity."*

  - World Health Organization, 1948

Healthcare vs Wellness
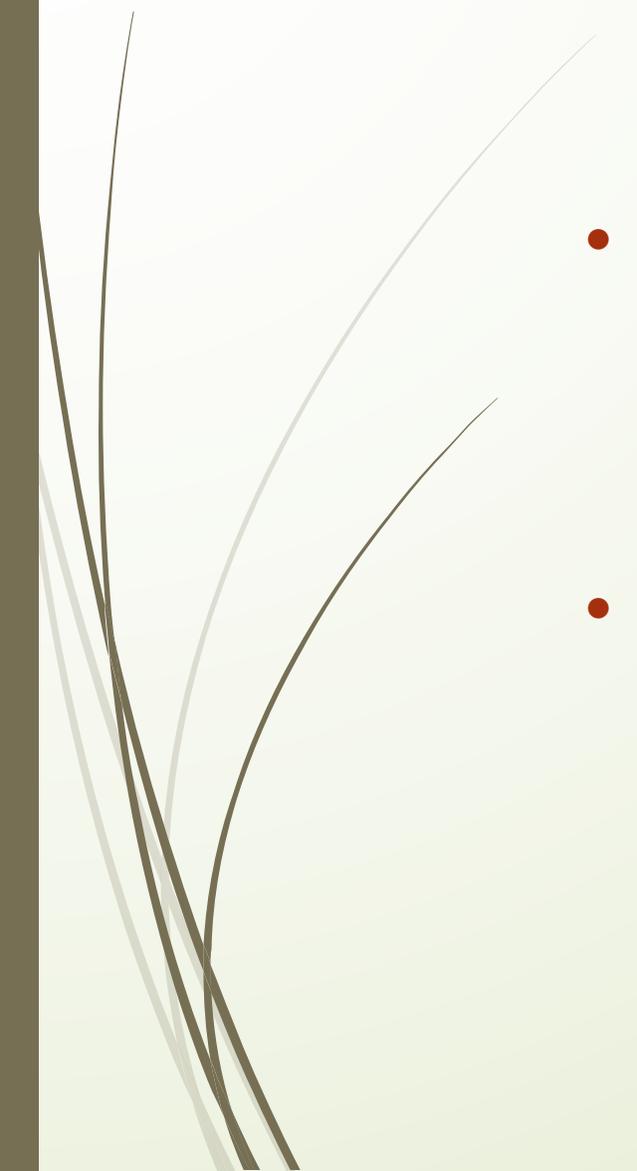
- Healthcare impacts almost every major segment of our everyday lives
  - Economically
    - Rising costs of healthcare
  - Scientifically
    - Stem-cell research, increasing lifespan
  - Politically
    - Access to healthcare, mental health insurance

- United States still runs on a medical model of healthcare
  - Reactive vs. Proactive
  - When do you go to the doctor?
  - Prescriptions

Then vs Now

- Now vs. 1900s
  - Average lifespan:
    - 1900 - 49 years old
    - Now - 77.7 years old
  - Causes of death:
    - 1900 - infectious diseases
    - Now - chronic lifestyle-related diseases

Causes of Death

1900	Present Day
Pneumonia	Heart disease
Influenza	Cancer
Tuberculosis	Stroke (cerebrovascular diseases)
Diarrhea	Chronic lower respiratory diseases

The Solution?

- The United States is in desperate need of a paradigm shift in terms of healthcare
  - Politicians - legislation allowing greater access to healthcare
  - Doctors/Helpers - encouraging more proactive solutions
  - Clients/Patients - willingness to get help before it is needed
- As a society, we have to change the way we see the world through our:
  - Health
  - Work
  - Stress management
  - Sleep patterns, eating habits, and exercise routines
  - Social interactions
  - Definitions of success
  - Everyday attitudes

Self-Care for the Helper

"Until you value yourself, you won't value your time. Until you value your time, you will not do anything with it." – M. Scott Peck

"Love yourself first and everything else falls into line. You really have to love yourself to get anything done in this world." – Lucille Ball

"Self-care is never a selfish act – it is simply good stewardship of the only gift I have, the gift I was put on earth to offer to others" – Parker Palmer

Self-Care for the Helper

- Survey of 501 professional counselors (Lawson, 2007) found that the most endorsed career-sustaining behaviors were:
  - Sense of humor
  - Spend time with partner/family
  - Maintain balance between professional and personal lives
  - Maintain self-awareness
  - Maintain sense of control over work responsibilities.

Ten Tasks to Increase Resiliency (Adapted from Skovholt, 2012)

- Recognizing that making one's own needs a priority is essential in the ability to care for others.
- Creating everyday habits and routines that help to replenish one's vigor.
- Taking pride in having a positive impact on the lives of others.
- Setting boundaries.
- Widening one's definition of success to include small but meaningful accomplishments.
- Advocating for a hospitable work environment that allows for growth both professionally and personally.
- Protecting oneself from unhealthy relationships that extract more energy than they return.
- Becoming more self-aware through personal counseling and continuing education.
- Taking a timeout from the often seriousness of work.

Indivisible Self Model of Wellness

- Comprised of 17 factors divided into five categories of wellness
  - Physical Self
  - Social Self
  - Essential Self
  - Coping Self
  - Creative Self

The Indivisible Self

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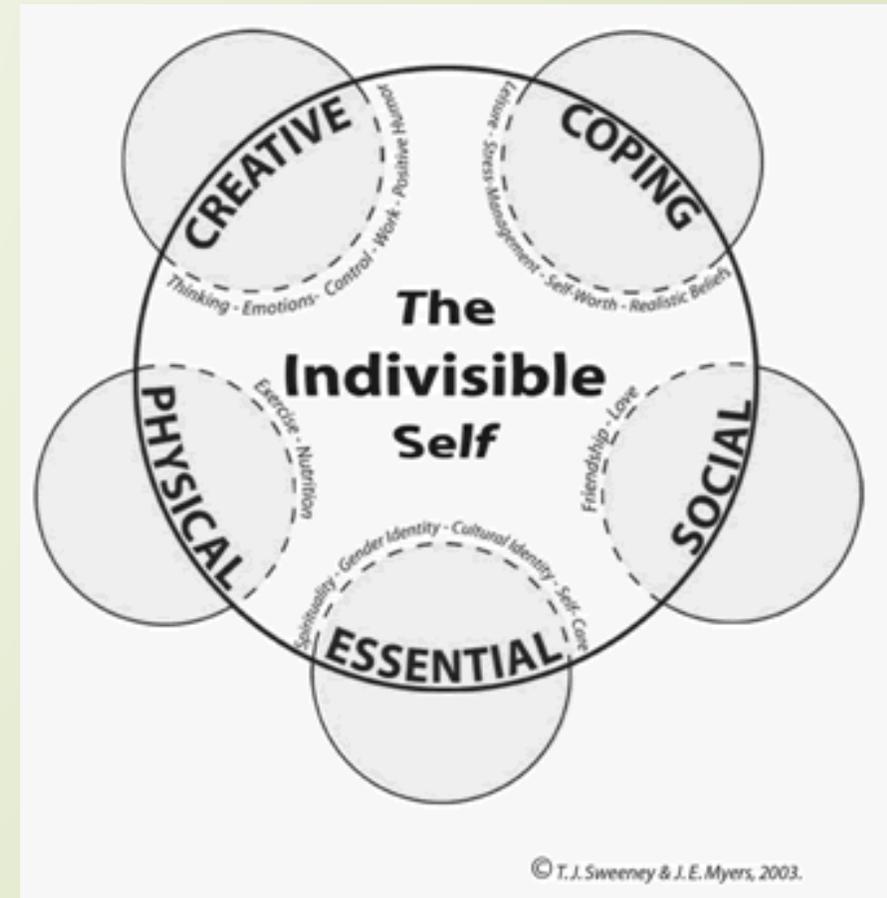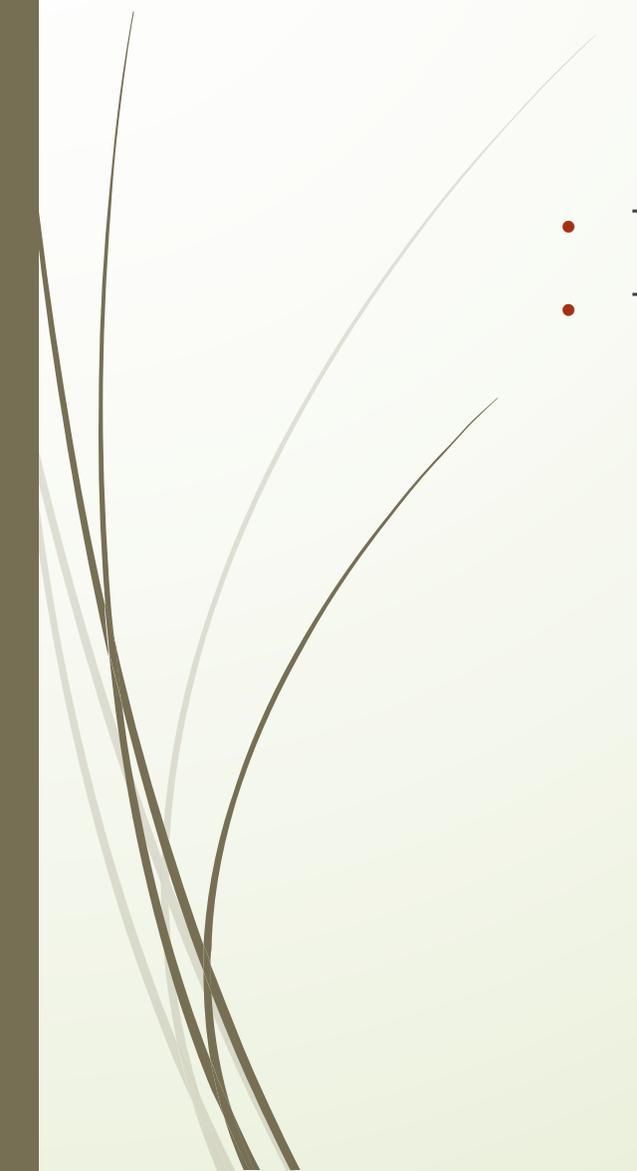
Physical Self

- The most thought of in terms of wellness
- Two components:
  - Exercise
    - Engaging in physical activity in order to better one's physical health
  - Nutrition
    - Maintaining a balanced diet in order to better one's physical health

Social Self
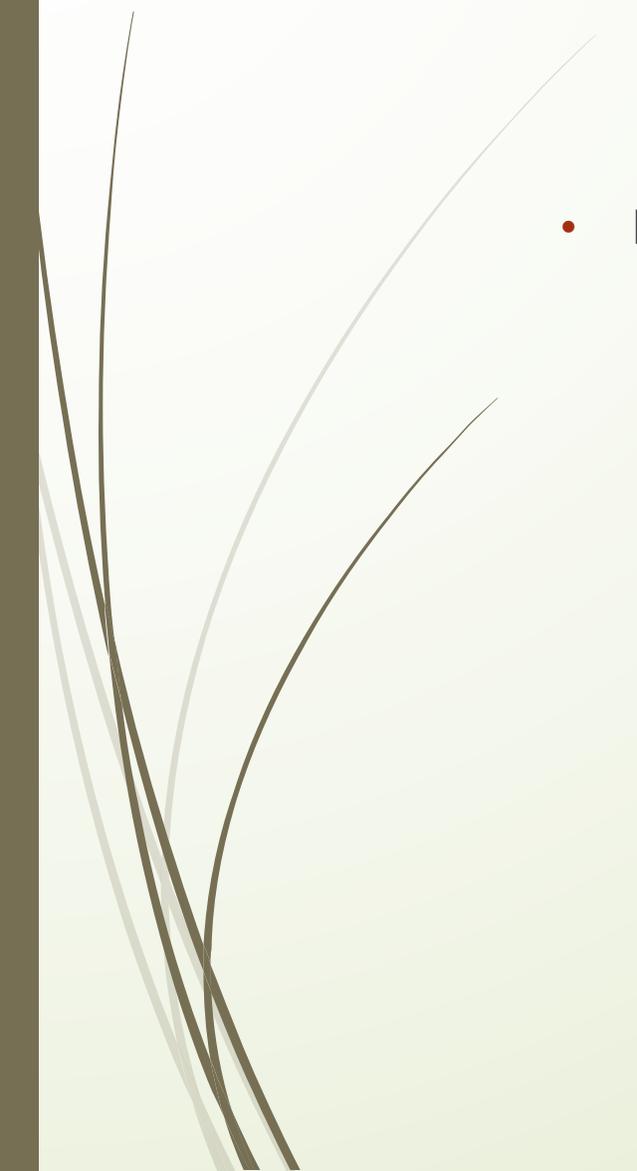
- Having a "social life" is important to one's health!
  - Love
    - Relationships characterized by intimacy, trust, and self-disclosure. Distinguished by a familial, marital, or sexual commitment
  - Friendship
    - Connections and relationships with others, but that do not hold a familial, marital, or sexual commitment

Essential Self
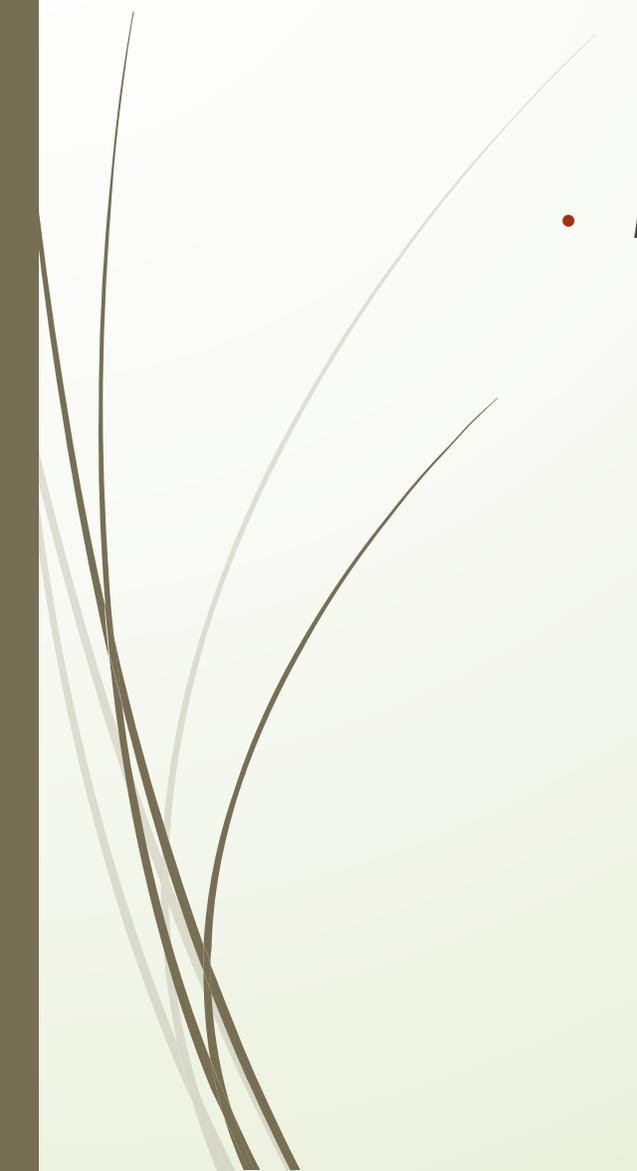
- Making meaning out of life, relationships, and self.
  - Spirituality
    - Practicing personal beliefs and behaviors in an effort to recognize the world beyond one's self.
    - Not to be confused with religious practice.
  - Self-Care
    - Actively taking responsibility for the betterment of one's self by completing tasks and routines to ensure positive wellness.
  - Gender Identity
    - Satisfaction and recognition of one's own gender.
  - Cultural Identity
    - Satisfaction and recognition of one's own culture.

Coping Self

- Regulation of one's responses to life's events and the ability to rise above negative stresses.

  - Realistic Beliefs
    - Recognizing impossible goals and being satisfied in one's own imperfection.

  - Stress Management
    - Remaining in tune to one's own stress level and taking steps to reduce stress when needed.

  - Self-Worth
    - Valuing one's self despite mistakes and noted flaws.

  - Leisure
    - Activities or interests that one participates in during free time.

Creative Self

- Creativity and imagination help us to overcome obstacles.
  - Thinking
    - Maintaining a mentally active lifestyle by properly considering multiple perspectives and embracing a curious approach to learning.
  - Emotions
    - Experiencing and expressing one's feelings appropriately.
  - Control
    - Believing in one's self and properly expressing needs to others.
  - Positive Humor
    - Utilizing humor to accomplish tasks and goals, as well as being able to take life's complications and mistakes light-heartedly.
  - Work
    - Satisfaction in one's career, jobs, chores, and routine tasks.

Purposeful Wellness
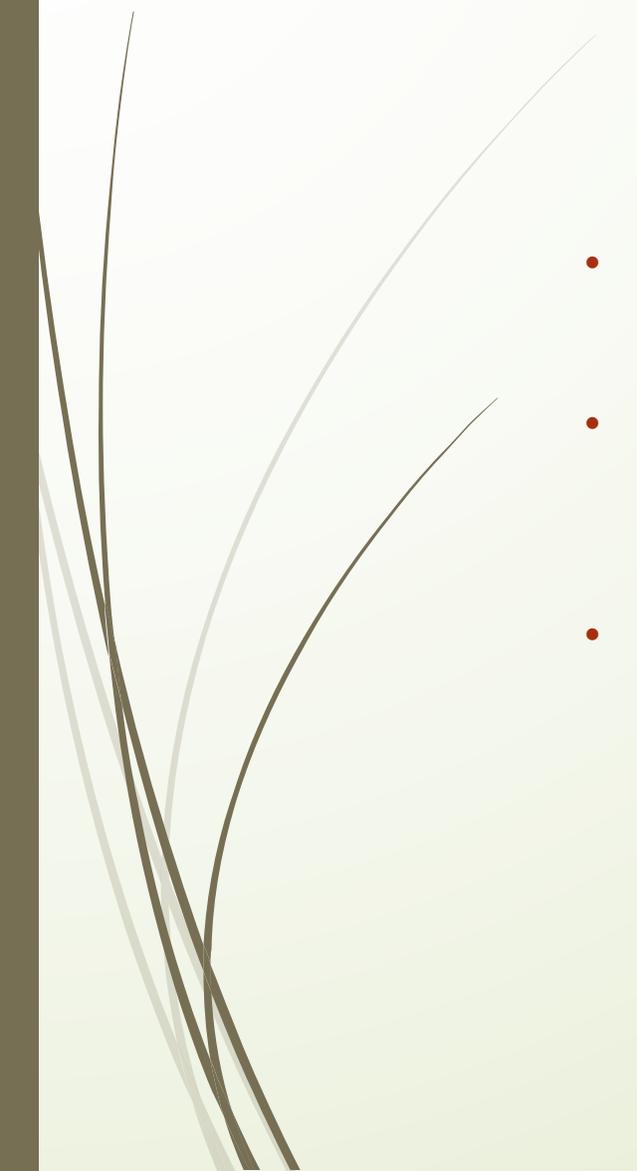
- As mentioned, many of these factors you already do regularly
  - Watching TV, working out, playing video games, spending time with loved ones
- Changing your mindset about wellness
  - Instead of just casually doing something without thought, be mindful and tell yourself this is for your wellness
- Challenging yourself to try new experiences
  - Routines, while supportive, can also cause us to forget about wellness benefits

Questions?

- Feel free to email me at brett.gleason@unlv.edu

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