What Is Wellness?
According to the National Wellness Institute, “Wellness is an active process through which people become aware of, and make choices toward, a more successful existence.” This definition describes a shift from unconscious living – where you do not think about your health until you have a problem or experience symptoms – to conscious living – where you are actively making healthy choices to promote your success and wellbeing.

Wellness Is Multidimensional & Holistic
Wellness is multidimensional in that there are several different areas of life considered to be a part of overall wellness, as shown in the Wellness Wheel above. Wellness is not just about physical activity and good nutrition. It includes positive choices and a sense of fulfillment spiritually, occupationally, psychologically, physically, environmentally and socially.

Wellness is holistic in that it encompasses the total person and explores the relationship between various dimensions of wellness. Instead of simply directly treating symptoms, such as poor nutrition, our approach to wellness involves understanding how the various dimensions are interrelated and may be affecting one another. If you are not psychologically well, for instance, it is likely that your success in other areas of life will be impacted as well.

For more information about wellness workshops, contact the Wellness Program Coordinator at 816-235-1862 or via e-mail at shahmohammadin@umkc.edu. Upcoming student announcements and bulletins will include workshop dates and times.

Why Wellness?
National College Health Assessments have shown year after year that college students experience high rates of stress during their time in school. Depression and anxiety, family and financial troubles, and other factors outside of a student’s control can also come into play. As a medical student in a rigorous six-year program, you are even more susceptible to stress, and uncontrollable life circumstances are likely to take a greater toll on your success and wellbeing.

You are entering a career field in which the lives of others will be in your hands. If you are “impaired,” then you will be unable to reach your full potential and will only be able to provide sub-optimal care. This puts both your license and the lives of others at risk.

As a physician-in-training, you are setting an example for others and should treat yourself as your own first patient. This includes regular checkups and other behaviors that promote a healthy and successful life.
An important key to developing as a student & a future physician is self-awareness.

In addition to the intellectual capacity for the sciences, medical school requires strong time-management skills, self-discipline, and responsibility. In a six-year program, these skills are even more imperative.

Change is not easy. All medical students should begin breaking down the areas of stress in their lives and coming up with feasible, measurable steps to achieve these skills early on in their academic careers.

Wellness Planning is a great way to do just that. As a service to you, the UMKC School of Medicine Wellness Program offers individual planning and coaching. The first session involves the Take Care of Yourself wellness inventory. This inventory will allow you to do the following:

- Identify current stressors
- Identify strengths
- Identify areas for improvement
- Create an action plan

Wellness Workshops

In addition to Wellness Planning and Coaching, the UMKC School of Medicine Wellness Program offers a variety of workshops throughout the year, including the following:

Cooking For College Students
Learn easy, fast, and wallet-friendly recipes ideal for busy students on the go. Learn the basics of what to keep in your pantry, necessary equipment, and easy and effective meal-planning strategies.

“The Work”
Learn Byron Katie’s internationally acclaimed four-question method of challenging your negative, stressful thoughts. These simple questions will improve your relationships, your mood, and your overall wellbeing.

“Therapeutic Lifestyle Change (TLC)”
Learn Dr. Stephen Ilardi’s research-based holistic treatment for depression. Studies have shown it is more effective than drugs and therapy.

Follow-up appointments with the Wellness Coach will allow you to evaluate and modify your Wellness Plan and goals as necessary until you succeed.