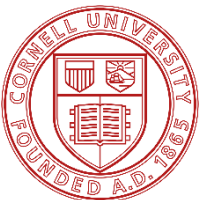


From Me to We: Understanding Community Wellbeing

Workforce Wellbeing & the Dept. of Inclusion & Belonging (DIB)
Community Wellbeing Series
July 28, 2026



Why This? Why Now?

There's been A LOT going on globally, nationally, locally, and at Cornell that impacts individuals as well as communities.

The Workforce Wellbeing and DIB teams recognize the various impacts on employees and are partnering on a "Community Wellbeing Series" to provide resources and offerings to communities that may help when navigating current challenges.



What is “Community Wellbeing”?

- The concept, sometimes referred to as “Collective Wellbeing”, has been around since after World War II and re-emerged in 1990’s as social justice and equity concerns increased.
- It refers to how connected people feel to people and places around them.
- It involves considering the combination of social, economic, environmental, cultural, and political conditions that are essential for communities to flourish and fulfill potential.
- It can be defined broadly as “being well together”- how well a group of people is doing.

What Makes It Different From Individual Wellbeing?



Individual: *How am **I** doing?*

- **Personal focus** on individual's satisfaction, happiness, etc.
- **Subjective indicators**- how person feels about their life and circumstances
- **Internal Resources**- relies on one's own efforts, coping strategies, etc.



Community: *How are **WE** doing?*

- **Collective focus** on how well the group as a whole is thriving
- **Systemic indicators**- what externally is impacting safety, equity, etc.
- **Shared Resources**- relies on accessibility of services and opportunities to all

Community Wellbeing Helps Shape Individual Wellbeing

- The environment (physical or virtual; local or broader) directly impacts a person's wellbeing...

*When a community is functioning well together,
individuals can thrive better!*

- Social identity, position in group/organization/society, and whether everyone experiences fair and equitable treatment ALL impact both individual and community wellbeing...

*Feelings of loneliness, anxiety, and depression improve when a
person is part of a community or organization that feels fair,
inclusive, and representative of them!*



Sometimes an Individual Could Be Fine... but their Community May Not Be!

EX: A member of a historically marginalized community (i.e. LGBTQ+, disabled, woman, person of color) could be experiencing positive individual wellbeing but assess that their community's wellbeing is not as good because of what is going on legislatively, socially, politically, etc.

EX: An employee may experience positive wellbeing with their work/on their team but assess that the greater organization, as a whole, is not doing as well.



What *Impacts* Community Wellbeing

Need to look at people, power, and place (whether physical or virtual)

- How are **people** relating or interrelating to one another?
- Do they feel they have **power** to participate and engage in decision making?
- Does the **place** provide opportunities to engage and participate?

The answers to these questions will tell you if the community is experiencing positive or negative wellbeing.



What *Improves* Community Wellbeing

Creating environments that are supportive, engaging, and empowering so that every community member can participate and thrive!

- Designing inclusive spaces and processes
- Encouraging shared values and purpose
- Supporting diverse and accessible wellness and psychological safety
- Providing space to come together and give voice to needs, share support, invite ideas/collaboration

At work, it means moving beyond individual perks and focusing on the collective health, connection, and culture of the entire organization!

Examples of Community Wellbeing in Action



In Life:

- Peer Support Group (New parent group; Alcoholics Anonymous)
- Neighborhood programs or groups (local community boards/programs; block parties)
- Identity based Celebrations (PRIDE; Juneteenth; Veterans Day programs)
- Common interest/concern efforts (advocacy groups; protests; community gardens)

At Work:

- Employee Resource Groups (Colleague Network Groups; Workforce Affinity Groups)
- Diverse and accessible wellness options (group fitness classes; quarterly health campaigns)
- Work Flexibility protocols (flex work agreements; floating holidays)
- Open and transparent communication processes (regular updates during times of change and/or Q and A opportunities with leadership)

Going Forward...

- Contact us for support or if you have ideas for topics or resources you'd like to see as part of the Community Wellbeing Series!
 - Dept. of Inclusion & Belonging: inclusion@cornell.edu
 - Work/Life: Worklife@cornell.edu
 - Wellness: wellness@cornell.edu
 - FSAP: <https://fsap.cornell.edu> or fsap@cornell.edu
- For more resources, visit the Community Wellbeing Series webpage at:
<https://hr.cornell.edu/culture/workload-wellbeing-and-connection/community-wellbeing-series>