



# Pursuit of Well-Being with the Philosophy of Hinohara-Ism and New Elderly Association (NEA)

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## Abstract

Supreme physician named Shigeaki Hinohara had developed medicine, psychology and philosophy in Japan. He lived up to 105 years old and established New Elderly Association (NEA) with Hinohara-ism leading to well-being. Authors have managed Shikoku district of NEA for years, where educational forum was conducted. Well-being refers to a state in which people are physically, mentally, and socially fulfilled and happy. In recent Health 21 movement in Japan, predominantly controlled factors are exercise, work, sleep, rest and meals. Furthermore, NEA has some slogans of theme, mission and goals which lead to usual well-being in the light of anti-aging.

**Keywords:** New Elderly Association (NEA); Hinohara-ism; Well-being; Dr. Shigeaki Hinohara

## Commentary Article

In Japan, supreme physician had been well-known who worked in St. Luke's International Hospital Tokyo until 105 years. He was Dr. Shigeaki Hinohara and established "New Elderly Association (NEA)" in 2000 autumn [1]. NEA included the novel perspectives for 21st century (2001-2100), and its purpose was to pursue well-being and happiness in the elderly people [2].



Table 1: The characteristics of the elderly.

He developed NEA association broadly in Japan, and Shikoku Island division was managed by Uchida, Bando and others [3,4] (Figure 1). He emphasized the perspectives of dream, destiny, reason for living, mission, and well-being.

The supreme doctor Hinohara had taught his "Hinohara-ism philosophy" to lots of doctors, medical staffs, patients with various problems, and healthy people. Among them, one of the important themes was the persistent well-being. It is not easy to have satisfactory wellness or well-being. The WHO definition is an ideal goal, but it is difficult to achieve. This perspectives were meant to encourage people to think about health more broadly and to pay attention not only to physical health, but also to mental and social aspects [5].

In our real life, it is almost impossible to obtain perfect wellness all the time, but this definition serves as a guide to continue adequate behavior. By striving to improve our health, we can establish certain level of QOL and sense of well-being. The key is not to strive for perfection, but to pursue well-balanced health condition and to find what works best for you. Small daily efforts and choices can lead to improved overall health and well-being. For example,

a regular lifestyle, stress management, and building good relationships would be included [6].

Well-being refers to a state in which people are physically, mentally, and socially fulfilled and happy. This does not simply mean the absence of disease or disability, but also includes being satisfied with one's own life, actively participating in life, and building good relationships with others [7]. Well-being has several aspects, such as i) physical well-being: maintaining a healthy body, ii) mental well-being: managing stress and improving mental health, and iii) social well-being: having good relationships and social connections. It has been an important concept for enhancing an individual's sense of happiness and quality of life. Further, improving the well-being of people in local communities and around the world is also attracting attention as part of sustainable development.

The word "health" is widely used in daily life. As in a health check-up, it means that the body is generally healthy for a short period of time. Wellness is a term that is paired with illness. It was proposed in the United States in the 1960s to distinguish it from traditional health [8] Wellness is based on health and includes a lifestyle that seeks to live better. Therefore, the difference between health and wellness is whether it is for a short period of time or with continuing intention for improvement.

For the word "well-being", the spelling includes being for the nuance of continuity. It has a meaning that is far removed from health, and a healthy state seems close to wellness. As apparent difference, well-being has been interpreted as healthy and "a state of happiness." Similarly to the concept of primary care, its greatest feature presents that well-being means the involvement of people's happiness more comprehensively. In the past, many companies proposed their wellness programs that continuously supported employees' health efforts. However, this did not include a sense of happiness. Recently, the policies that companies offer have taken a longer-term view, and the difference is that they always set the overall goal of happiness at a higher level, with the aim of well-being.

Japan has formerly national health movement named Health 21 (1st grade) [9]. Among the basic recommendation, they were 5 factors for out ADL and QOL. They were meal, exercise, rest, alcohol, and smoking some decades ago. From recent perspective points of view, five fundamental elements would be in the followings. They are i) Exercise: Healthy sports, not competitive sports. Even if it's just 15 minutes a day, every person has the habit of getting away from work and working up a good sweat every day, ii) Work: Meaningful work is the source of meaning in life. One feels a sense of purpose in the daily activities. One feels whether each existence is meaningful or not, iii) Sleep: Falling asleep easily and waking up easily. Sufficient sleep increases one's daytime activity level. Get into the habit of getting up and going to bed early, iv) Rest: Rest is the lubricant for the mind. Get into the habit of resting

frequently, and v) Meals: Breakfast is the source of the daily activity. Get into the habit of sitting around the dining table [10].

The characteristics of the elderly can be summarized (Table 1).

*Table 1: The characteristics of the elderly.*

Positive aspects	Negative aspects
a wealth of wisdom	health problems
rich experience	social isolation
support from family	declining physical strength
contributing to society	technological lag
maintaining good health	stereotypes
friendliness	forgetfulness
fulfilling hobbies	driving risks
eagerness to learn	financial difficulties
perseverance	difficulty adapting
living witness to history	mental health problems

They can be divided into positive aspects and negative aspects, where various factors are involved. For negative aspects, they are not for avoidable but for manageable according to each situation. These characteristics became the foundation for the concept of NEA [2]. They include the followings: i) theme is to love, to start and to endure, ii) mission is to teach the importance of peace and love to children, and iii) goals are to develop regular lifestyle, to care for others lovingly, to be grateful for everyday life and to know that it is never too late to start or create something no matter what age [11].

In summary, the authors have continued medical and social activities in Shikoku Island division of NEA. We plan to develop physical and psychological well-being and happiness associated with the philosophy of Hinohara-ism.

### Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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## SUNTEXT REVIEWS

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