

Diagnosing the SICKness in ForenSICs: Prescriptions for Wellness

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It was August of 1988; I was a relatively new program director attending the first National Developmental Conference on Individual Events. I had come to learn from professional educators how to create a successful program. I wanted to know how to craft successful debaters and national championship speakers. Imagine my surprise to hear of a paper by Hatfield, Hatfield, and Carver in tournament practices on wellness in forensics. This was not what I had hoped to hear from these successful coaches. I was quick to lament with the other conferees, "What is this 'banana bread' paper?" I was also among the group who scoffed at the granola served between rounds the following year at the AFA-NIET hosted by North Dakota State University. Such wellness nonsense! I had more important things to do to make my program competitive and successful. And so for nearly a decade, I put the notion of wellness in forensics out of my head, and continued building what today I believe is a successful program. That was until SCA of 1996 when by some fluke I was a respondent to a panel on wellness in forensics. The papers had arrived just hours prior to the convention, but I was shocked to read the reality of this activity on the human body as I devoured the Leland (1996) paper. His narrative presentation was even more startling, as I realized that forensics had just lost another great coach to the ranks of college administration. But then I learned why. He, like the majority of those conferees, had dismissed any notion of wellness from their programs. The issue of wellness had once again been raised, and this time, it was not to be ignored. The past several years have brought a new, albeit tardy, interest in wellness. In this day and age of assessment-mania it's time to assess the wellness of the activity we hold so dear. This essay seeks to answer the following questions: (1) Are we well as an activity? (2) Are we well people?

By most standards, the first question is quickly and easily answered with a resounding "yes." The number of forensics programs nationally has remained relatively constant. Our national tournaments are hallmarks of excellence, each individual events tournament typically attended by over 100 schools. Debate has forged a new cooperative ground. New forensic activities are burgeoning which participants never envisioned a decade ago. The quality of our debates and research are astoundingly high. Our interpers have pushed envelopes over never dreamed of in the realm of black bookdom and we've squeezed 22 citations into a winning extemp speech. We've moved from small budget, single coach programs to ones that travel nationally, even internationally, and we've created more national tournaments than we can fit into two month's of weekends. Indeed, the quality of our activity is high. What we've created is good, and we need to step back for a moment of pride. But, as critical thinkers always striving to improve, we must ask at what price we've accomplished all this competitive excellence.

And therein lies the answer to the second question. Can we truly declare

our activity healthy given the state of the health of the individual participants? Indeed, our activity is only as healthy as the people who participate in it are, so an assessment of our individual health is clearly warranted. To return to that question, are we well people? Leland (1996) answers with a resounding "no!" As he examined the typical tournament lifestyle from the perspective of a director, he recounted its detrimental impacts on daily health. Indeed while his focus was only on coaches, the poor health habits are not limited to forensics educators, but trickle down to our students. Weeks of catching up, too little sleep, intense competition, extensive travel, poor diet and little exercise become the pattern for entire seasons. Before long, these seasons tally up to become lifetimes. Is it any wonder that of those 70 forensic educators who attended that developmental conference in 1986, only 15 of them are still active coaches today? Before we can become too content with the forensics activity we've created, it's time to account for what wellness sacrifices have been made to create this activity which we're so proud of.

Causes of "Unwellness"

As have been assessed elsewhere, the costs have been high. Leland (1996) provides a frightening look at the toll forensics takes on physical health over time. Jones (1997) and Burnett and Olson (1998) have documented the impact forensics has on creating and maintaining healthy relationships. It's no secret that career health also is suffering as fewer and fewer forensic educators are in regular faculty positions with terminal degrees advocating the activity from a clear communication discipline perspective. Many a forensic educator has sacrificed a successful academic career and the security tenure offers for a chance at the brass ring of competitive forensic success. And the toll on psychological health, given the amount of stress, exhaustion, etc. which occurs in the activity is incapable of being accurately measured. Given the high intelligence level of the participants in this activity, we can only hypothesize why these unhealthy practices have become institutionalized.

In a word, competition. The dominant framework forensics educators use to make nearly all decisions involving their programs is how it will advance their team competitively. In both debate and individual events we've defied the sage advice from many an interp ballot that "less is more," and we've created a community that thrives on competition excess. The end result is that we've created an activity that defies what our medical doctors, insurance companies, even best friends and relatives tell us, "We all just work too hard." In essence, we've become addicted to the thrill of competition. Most forensic participants, myself included, have thrived on the pressure to succeed, to heavily invest in this worthwhile activity. The friendships we make, the personal rewards we feel from watching students' progress, and the fun of living life on the edge, traveling to new places, all make this activity unparalleled. Yet, over the years, it takes its toll on our overall health. Given our enthusiasm, it's easy to see why our students share our addiction. We run ourselves ragged from September to April in

our effort to provide every competitive advantage to our students. Yet in retrospect, our expectations for students to qualify as many events for nationals as possible translates into a heavy travel burden for them, even when many report they'd be happier with fewer opportunities and are happy to "take their chances" at fewer tournaments. So, as an activity, it's easy for all participants to get caught up in the excitement of the competition. The chief culprits of this intensely competitive and unwell activity are tradition; the length of the season; swing tournaments; and tournament length and rigor.

The advantages and disadvantages of substantial change in any one of these areas have already been significantly debated. While people agree with the problems, solutions are typically met with a "yes, but . . ." attitude. Yes, there's a problem, but no, I can't change my schedule, tournament, etc. We tend to believe that a hands off policy of "letting each individual director decide" what's best for his/her program is optimal given the different foci and resources of programs. However, many times these choices are constrained, indeed circumscribed by a number of factors. Tradition plays a significant role in many forensic decisions. As directors, we want the activity to stay like it is because this is all we've ever known, hence because we enjoy it, and we created it, it must be good. Often, we can predict our travel schedule years in advance as we hesitate to break with tradition. And today, many of the policy-makers and leaders of our various forensic organizations are not themselves active coaches. While many once were, the immediate impact of the day-to-day routine of a forensics program is not as present for many of our decision-makers. So it's easy for wellness issues to escape the forefront of their decision-making.

Several reasons account for the length of the season. Initially, there seems to be a sense of obligation that every program hosts a tournament; and/or tournament revenue is a significant means of financing a respective program. So, in order to squeeze in all these tournaments, the season lasts for nearly seven months. Within some regional areas, directors fear alienating any host by their lack of personal attendance, so directors attend tournaments even when it is not essential, just to allay the fears of their colleagues. And while the law of supply and demand does dictate which tournaments thrive and which disappear into oblivion, the overwhelming reason people choose to continue with their current patterns is to be competitively successful.

Perhaps some data will counter these assumptions. Based on a voluntary study done by AFA-NIET District IX during the 1997-98 season, teams shortened their travel season by approximately 3 weeks at the beginning of the year, not traveling or accruing qualifying legs for the AFA-NIET until the second weekend in October. A cursory comparison of the results at the national tournament documents that the success rate of these teams actually improved at the national tournaments. Two independent measures confirm this conclusion. Initially, the number of NIET at-large slots qualified actually increased from 89 in 1996-97 to 102 in 1997-98, nearly a 15% increase. The total number of slots also indicates that shortening the season did not hamper actual attendance at the tournament, for the district sent 122 slots in 1997 while increasing that to 134 in

1998, a 10% increase despite a much smaller district qualifying tournament. Success rate of these slots also improved with 25 slots in elimination rounds in 1997 and 44 in 1998. The final measure could be number of national champions: 1 in 1997 and 5 in 1998. While these results are limited in scope, they do suggest that a shorter season can actually improve competitive results, perhaps due to the fresher nature of performances.

The wisdom of swing tournaments has long been questioned educationally since students have little opportunity between tournaments to respond to the feedback from their first ballots. Since more and more swing tournaments are being hosted on a single campus, providing a varied experience from one tournament to another is limited. Dickmeyer and Schnoor (1997) found a dramatic increase in swing tournaments during the past decade. In 1986-87 only 3 swings existed for individual events, in 1990-91 it had risen to four, compared to 34 swings in 1997-98. While providing more competition with less travel, these tournaments often try to compact 2 tournaments into the time period when previously just one existed. Often swing participants can become exhausted from the long days, minimal down time, and hectic schedule. And when the bulk of one's season consists of swing tournaments, the pressure mounts.

Again, more is thought to be better which accounts for the long duration of tournament days and their rigorous schedules. It is not uncommon for tournaments to last 14 to 15 hours for consecutive days. Many tournaments offer short meal breaks, if any, and participants are frequently not well rested due to travel fatigue, poor and irregular meals adding to the already stressful competitive tournament environment. Often, tournament directors try to squeeze in as many rounds as possible to provide ample competitive opportunities to justify high travel costs. However, data has already shown that the final results of fewer rounds are not appreciably different. Gass and Congalton (1991) found that there were not statistically different results when counting 2 versus 3 preliminary rounds in individual events. And Brusckke and Whalen (1991) found the same results when comparing a 6 versus 8 round debate tournament. While this could be construed as an argument for an increased number of swing tournaments, perhaps it is a more compelling argument for shortening our tournament day to create a more humane schedule, allowing for reasonable breaks for meals, etc. and finishing earlier in the day to promote healthy sleep patterns. It is easy to see why a myriad of reasons have contributed to an activity that compromises the health of its participants.

A Changed Mindset

Until directors adopt a wellness perspective into their decision-making, little is likely to change in contemporary forensic practices. Initially, it is perhaps only truthful to admit that past decisions have been made looking solely through a competitive lens. Today, directors must start relegating that lens to a secondary position, and begin by examining all decisions through a wellness lens. Asking a few basic questions, such as "Will this competitive experience be

healthy for me?" may seem like a selfish thing to do at first, but only if forensic educators are willing to examine the impact their decisions have first on themselves will they be able to see what impact their decisions will have on the wellness of others. Toward this end, three specific steps must be taken to integrate wellness into contemporary forensic practice.

1. Directors must be role models for wellness. It is a commonly accepted fact that students look to their coaches for more than coaching advice. Indeed, forensic educators are often among the most influential role models students have during their collegiate years. As Dickmeyer and Schnoor (1997) documented, directors from the top 20 AFA-NIET programs sent their students to an average of 23 tournaments per year, while averaging 15.75 tournaments themselves. These travel patterns are despite their belief that the average number of tournaments students need to attend to be successful at nationals is 9! Their study was even more frightening when analyzing the abbreviated time span in which these tournaments occur. A month-by-month analysis shows that contestants in these programs typically travel every non-holiday weekend between September and April. Certainly these statistics are alarming and belittles the notion that directors know what's best for their programs. Indeed, forensics has perpetuated an unhealthy environment for generations. Being raised in an unhealthy activity it's easy to see why forensic educators perpetuate the current practices: they're successful and it's the only way we all know. Few have deviated from these extensive travel patterns or "unwell" behaviors. It's time for us to become "healthy" positive role models, by looking first at ourselves and the choices we make on a daily basis. From this follows:

2. Small steps are not enough. Given the severity of the problem, minor changes will not exact the magnitude of results necessary. For as wellness guru Ardell (1994) pointed out in Leland, in order to afford high wellness, change must be integrated into each facet of life. Likewise, the forensic activity has a long way to go to integrate wellness into its collective lifestyle. While choosing not to attend a regular and close tournament one season, I phoned the tournament director to explain that the tournament schedule was not healthy and requested he make some changes in it. His response to my pleas for wellness was that instead of shortening a 17-hour day, they'd decided to serve pizza to the contestants after one round. While arguably the easiest of the wellness problems to fix, a slight modification in the tournament schedule to allow students pizza could hardly be construed as promoting wellness. As Carver (1997) documents in her organizational view of wellness, grass roots movements toward wellness will fail. Allen (1987) documents that a major and all encompassing effort is necessary to integrate wellness into a community. And to be honest, these may prove to be financially expensive changes. For so long, forensic coaches have scrimped and saved to insure maximum travel opportunities for students. Perhaps other concerns related to wellness, those which may cost more: an extra night in a hotel, an extra day of travel, a room to oneself, can be seen as fostering both safety and wellness and can change the way we make decisions.

3. National organizations must make policy actions that embrace wellness.

As Carver (1997) again documents, a top down approach is all that will be successful. For too long, our national bodies have been reluctant to make bold statements to embrace wellness and have even discouraged grass roots movements to experiment with policies which may produce some lasting wellness results. Early discussions of wellness policies focused largely on guidelines, which became initiatives. These lukewarm efforts do not address the importance of integrating wellness into the forensic community and could be construed as just paying lip service to advocates who believe in the importance of wellness. While any policy changes will likely disadvantage the immediate competitive success of some programs/individuals, the likely long term returns in improved health and wellness are likely to far outweigh the experiences had at another tournament or in another round. Indeed it could be argued that fewer competitive experiences will increase the importance of those that do exist, and the tradeoff in health could easily justify the memories. Several years ago, the CEDA organization began offering sweepstakes awards to teams who competed only during the spring semester. While this practice never received widespread support, a few teams did shorten their season to become eligible for this award. However, this was but a single attempt. As Carver (1996) noted, it's time for a "get serious" approach.

As wellness experts agree, the first step to embracing a wellness community is education. Wellness issues must become important to coaches. Perhaps this journal issue can serve as a wake up call for forensic educators to embrace wellness. While we believe our students, as young adults are more resilient and tolerant of contemporary unhealthy forensic practices, we do them no favors by fostering unhealthy practices and may further perpetuate the unhealthy activity in which we were all raised. It's time to become wellness educators in addition to forensic educators by integrating wellness education into each facet of our coaching, so that a student's knowledge of their heart rate, blood pressure, and cholesterol level is as common as their knowledge of their DI's character or DA's evidence. Again, support for our efforts will have to come from us since sadly, our administrators don't have the same financial incentive to keep students healthy as industry does for its employees. We need to objectify what wellness looks like.

Admittedly, we cannot revolutionize forensics overnight; it will be a process of change. However, with full knowledge of what current aspects of our activity jeopardize wellness, we must at the very least make our constituency aware of the potential wellness compromises we may make through active participation. And don't be surprised if you find yourself feeling resistant to change, as forensic educators we've become hooked into the dynamic thrills the activity has to offer. But, before we cater to such an addiction, perhaps we should include full disclosure of some of the unhealthy aspects so that all participants can make an informed choice knowing both the risks and the rewards; in essence, placing a surgeon general's warning on forensics. Only then will we have taken every opportunity to prevent burnout and allow people to choose knowledgeably their level of personal involvement.

Wellness has the potential to be good for forensics. While the transition to more well behaviors may require some relatively major adjustments and some reconceptualizing of competitive goals, these short-term hits are worth a lifetime of happiness and healthiness. Wellness in forensics is something to be embraced, and hopefully will someday be something to be celebrated, right along with all our other countless achievements.

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Thinking about Wellness (in Forensics): A Poetic Reflection

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I have been reflecting on wellness and what it means to be well.

Well - not the cavernous hole, but certainly that which offers refreshment and renewal; a source to draw from like strength, energy or focus. Well(s) - not to rise to the surface ready to flow, but certainly like the emergence of a good idea or inspiration and the impulse that guides action.

I am thinking about being well, as in healthy.

I am thinking about wellness; which indicates that state, quality, or condition of being well. Not just the physical body, but the organizational body of a healthy institution. The collective body that engages constructive criticism of its practices and the well-being of its constituents.

I am thinking about wellness as an instituted program for forensics; a health initiative, a call to remembrance, and a mandate on caring.

Mandated caring. That seems oxymoronic.
Surely all DOFs care.

But I am thinking about donuts for breakfast, fast foods for lunch and pizza for dinner. I am thinking about late tournament ends and early beginnings. I am thinking about district wide travel in university cared for vehicles. I am thinking about long drives and late night departures. I am thinking about seat belts. I am thinking about Minnesota winters and rocky terrains. I am reminded of accidents, and injuries, and deaths. I am thinking about the caution of caring and the culpability of not caring.

I am thinking about long tournament seasons, rigorous travel schedules, rehearsal schedules, the pressure to succeed and the penalties for not. I am thinking about student parties, sanctioned and "un." I am thinking about student drinking, sanctioned and "un." I am thinking about competition as pedagogy and pedagogy as competition, and where wellness fits in.

Mandated caring. That doesn't seem odd.

I am thinking about wellness, like governmental mandates against smoking in public buildings and mandates against sexual harassment in the work place, in the classroom. I am thinking about the administrative responsibility of caring, like counseling and nurturing in the job description of a DOF.

I am thinking about wellness;
physical wellness - the body,
psychological wellness - the mind,
academic wellness - graduation?

I am thinking about re-framing the competitive drive to foreground the caring impulse; the pedagogical imperative with the focus on the student in the competitor, the person in the student, the student at risk.

Well, it is good and prudent to be thinking about wellness;
it is good and proper,
it is satisfactory,
it is well.

But often we resist mandates — like drinking and driving, speed limits, smoking in public buildings, seat belts - we resist it like caring equals cost or at least convenience. Well it does.

What are the costs? Not cost as in \$\$ though some would argue it.
Cost as in a reduced calendar season; beginning late - ending early.
Cost as in a humane tournament schedule; beginning early - ending early.
Cost as in healthy snacks; an apple, an orange, a bagel offered throughout.
Cost as in pedagogy over competition,
Oops excuse me that equals benefits.

What is the cost of caring? The benefits are obvious.

I have been reflecting on wellness
and what it means to be well.

To be well is to have a balance between
the internal and the external,
the pedagogical and the competitive,
the goals and the practices.

Caring + Healthy = Wellness.

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The Health of the Directors of Forensics: Career Implication, Complications and Issues of Concern

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The doctor put it about as bluntly as he could. As you sat in the fairly innocuous examination room your family doctor said, "You can either drastically change your priorities in life and in your work, or you can die." Now, it seems like a vast overstatement to you at the time. After all, you had spent a great deal of time explaining what it was that you did as a job. You taught classes. No problem there. You researched and studied in your areas of interest. No problem with that part either. You were the Director of a speech and debate program. What did that entail, he queried? Well, (and it sounded absurd as you said it out loud) you spend long hours preparing/coaching speech and debate students, then you spend from two to twelve hours on the road to a speech tournament that may begin at noon on Friday and end at eight on Sunday night, then you drive home. While at the tournament you begin your days at six in the morning and end about midnight. You eat primarily fast food (when you eat anything), you snack a great deal (you've tried EVERY version of potato chips, candy bars, and caffeinated beverages out there), you smoke too much (or at least hang around people who do), and you figure you will catch up on sleep during a sabbatical leave in seven years. And that is just the stuff you will admit to him. You don't even talk about the level of stress that comes from tournaments, recruiting, budgeting, tournament administration, balancing teaching, research and travel, or the level of stress that it can cause on relationships and families. You also haven't talked about the times that you DO take a break, and it happens to be at the hotel bar where alcohol is many times involved. He looks at you quizzically and tells you about your elevated blood pressure, your weight problems, your marginal diabetes, your potential ulcer, and that heart burn that you felt last week, may not have been something that mild. I know that this kind of visit may sound very distant to some of you, but it is all close to home for me and many other colleagues in forensics. My office visit came in the summer of 1995 and I'll be honest, this office visit scared the "hell" out of me, and made me re-evaluate what it was that I was doing and what impact it was having on my health. Thus, this topic is very close to me and in some terms it should be closer to many directors in the activity. The physical and emotional health of individuals is at stake, but more importantly we may be looking at the disease of the future in recruiting and retaining the next generation of coaches/directors. In today's forensic world we have come to deal with "coach/director burnout" from many external factors, however I believe we have overlooked a very crucial component of the director's role, and that is his/her health. This article will attempt to take a brief look at some of the health factors that have become prominent on the forensics scene, and then offer some solutions for the individual and for the activity as a whole.

The "real" cause of burnout

The forensic literature is uniquely devoid of any kind of information about the health status of directors and coaches. We have engaged in a somewhat inactive discussion of what burnout is and why it occurs (but it is almost as if we are afraid to broach the subject from a personal standpoint). In many cases we have looked for the "disease" in other places without looking to the results of those areas. Preston (1995) indicated that much of what is attributed to coach burnout is related to program pressures, student pressures, and external problems from the university (budget cuts, etc.). He states that there are certain "unavoidable" contributing factors which include, "...the logistics and time it takes to plan trips - no matter how few are taken - during the year requires time, and creates stress . . ." (p. 17). Though Preston points out some very considerable problems that do contribute to burnout, I believe that the manifestation of those problems may well be in the physical and emotional health of the director.

In 1992, Burnett-Pettus and Danielson at least gave us a point of reference when they described for us the types of programs that many of these directors were involved with in the 1990's. At one point they share some of the frustrations that survey respondents who were directors of combined debate and individual event programs vented, and concluded that the incredible pressures of time and sacrifice that these individuals put in "threatened coach burnout." In this sense, we may see a slight release of pressure coming in the form of programmatic changes, but is it enough and is that the right answer?

Several studies have talked about the value of the activity versus the "cost" to students in the activity. From Edney (1953) to Schroeder, Rodgers, Ray, Cox & Adams in the *Pi Kappa Delta Proceedings* (1995), study in the activity has focused its efforts on the student participants. It may be time to turn that focus on the leaders of the activity.

Most notably, Hunt (1993) wrote of coaching burnout in the CEDA community. His causes were two-fold: (1) Under-hiring (to be read as hiring those not qualified to do the job of Director) and (2) a "stressful job environment" (16). He states that, "The second cause is a stressful job environment that makes a forensic career difficult by accentuating negative job conditions without a balancing of positive factors" (169). His elaboration comes at the hands of a failure to clearly define the job of the director, inadequate assistance, extra duties, and length of the competitive season. Whereas he hits on some very crucial areas, the health of the director is largely overlooked.

The Patient's File - What is wrong with us?

Though empirical data would help us see the major problems in the director's life and health, this paper begins with some observational, personal, and anecdotal evidence to classify the health concerns and risks. Amazingly, I think we will find they are very similar to those of other high stress arenas. The author

intends to follow up on this internal discussion with more study on the matter, including empirical data collection.

Since, health and fitness are not an area of expertise of mine I turned to a colleague who teaches "wellness" courses and writes in the area. He recommended one author who had a fairly reasonable approach (he contended). So, I picked up some of this health "guru's" books. Dr. Donald Ardell (1979; 1982; 1994), I soon learned, would HATE what we do and how we treat our bodies. In *High Level Wellness* (1982), Dr. Ardell contends in the following diagram what our levels of "wellness" and of "worseness" are in terms of health.

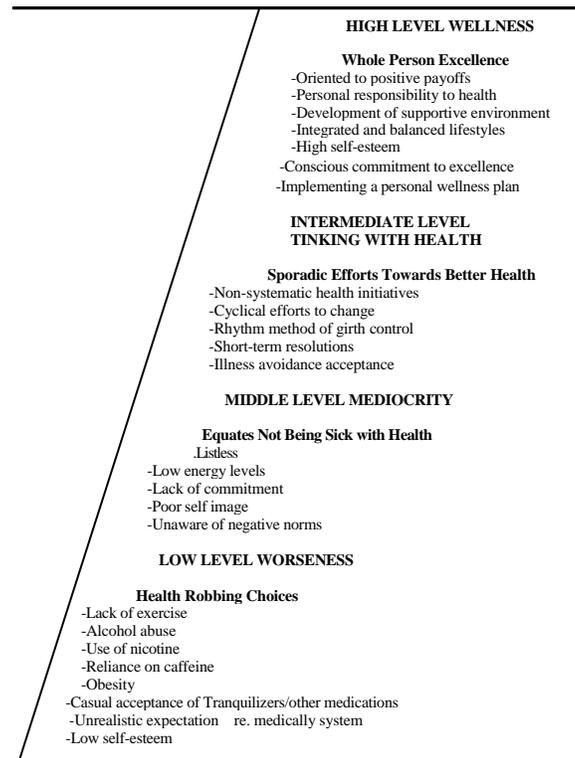


Diagram 1

One must merely go the "Low Level Wellness" category to find most of the forensic directing community. This is not to be generalized nor taken personally (or as I point out later, maybe it *should* be taken personally). We are continually participating in these health-robbing choices.

Lack of exercise

There is a distinct lack of exercise amongst directors. There seems to be no time, no energy (when everything else is done) and no priority. We know that it is good for us, but we find that no matter how hard we plan to put in that time for exercise there is something that always comes up that is "pressing." These are not trivial things (as I have tried to explain to doctors, etc.). These are budget matters that come up at 2 p.m. and must be resolved before you leave the next morning at 6 a.m. They are the high school students who are on campus and would like to meet with you. They are the matter of the grading that you promised that class, but didn't get done over the weekend as you thought. It is the here and now, that intercedes and pushes exercise out.

Alcohol Use

I'm not sure that I would want to see the statistics of how many directors/coaches enter into alcohol excesses. For many in the forensic community responsible alcohol use has never been seen as a real problem. I would contend that alcohol use seems to be on the decline at some tournaments, but it still plays a significant role. I know in my own situation, alcohol was a part of many of my memories of times as a competitor, and it has been a part of both my students' experiences and my own coaching experience. (Less so with the incredible time crunch of some swing tournaments!). In some cases, alcohol use and abuse have led to the demise of some of our most promising student competitors as well as some of our long time coaching colleagues.

Use of Nicotine

Here is where I may step on a bunch of toes. Dr. Ardell, as well as almost every doctor in the world, contends that nicotine use is the number one cause of problems in many of these other areas. For some reason, the stress that goes with our activity, associated with the down-time that exists in our schedule (between times of running fifty million miles an hour), encourages an environment of smokers. Everyone has their own reason for picking up the habit, but our activity sure does nothing to help those who want to quit. Empirical data may provide us with a better understanding of how many come to the activity with the habit, how many pick it up in the activity, and the rationales for why people smoke in the amounts they do at and around tournaments.

Reliance on Caffeine

Mountain Dew, Jolt, 40 ounce soft drinks, 24 ounce cups of coffee (the kind with the grounds settling on the bottom of the cup!). All of these are the standard drink fare of the forensic coach/director on any given day. Studies by the National Wellness Center (University of Wisconsin) show that the average individual consumes between 16-24 ounces a day of these caffeinated beverages (412). From a mere glance at the coffee table at a given tournament's "continental breakfast" one might contend that our community may set the high end of that spectrum. Then once the coffee and soft drinks are added from the trip to and

from the tournament, the one that substitutes for lunch, and the one that gets us through the late afternoon until a late evening dinner, we can attest to the high dependency we have on caffeine. We joke about it, we laugh over it, and we may very well abuse it.

Obesity

In an effort not to hit too close to home, I will deal with my own personal experience in this area. As a high school football player, I was athletically built at 6'2" and 230 pounds. After just one year of not playing an organized sport, I had gained almost 60 pounds. After four years on the forensic circuit as a competitor and then another 10 years as a coach and director, I weighed in at 325. It was not due entirely to one aspect of my life or another. It very admittedly was a combination of factors. I ate less well. I exercised minimally, and the schedule with which I ate was irregular at best. In the "off-season" I attempted to lose weight. I tried many "programs" for weight loss and many of them had success with me until I was thrown back into the competition season, and went back to late night meals, the quick meals, the zero nutrition meals, and the skipping of meals. In each case, I knew that lifestyle changes were necessary, however I was unable to make those changes in the throws of the season. It just seemed too hard.

Only when the doctor diagnosed heart, blood pressure and diabetic conditions for me did I take the weight loss seriously. I took off 30 pounds the first year and am doing it at a very slow pace, but it didn't come on in a hurry so why should it come off in a hurry.

Without delving into personal examples, I believe by telling my story, many can relate to what I said in one way or another. The results may not be as dramatic, but the situation is the same. Again, one look around our activity evidences many obese and overweight individuals. Some of it is due to the nature of our activity.

Acceptance of Medication

For many years the use of medications to cover the problems we have in the area of health have blinded us to the real problem. I have talked with many coaches/directors who have (at one time or another) been on medications for blood pressure, ulcers, etc. The environment of forensics has not changed in the last several years, so I'm not sure what we have been waiting for. We have continued to put our bodies through a high level of stress and abuse in the natural course of a season, but have merely thought that the medications alone would "solve" the problem. However, we have seen many people maintain or even increase the amount and types of medications they are taking and have done nothing to change their lifestyles.

The Patient's Prescription

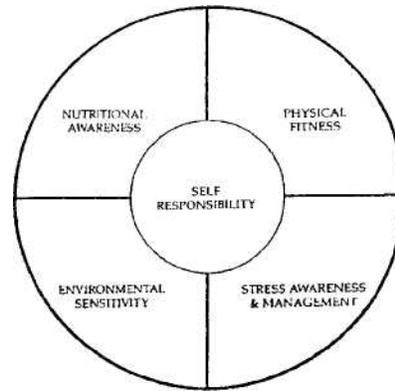
**DIMENSIONS OF WELLNESS**

Diagram 2

Nutritional Awareness is defined with questions that you ask yourself like: Do you use food as a reward/discipline? Do you use food for entertainment? Do you consume processed foods? Do you combine high-energy conversation or are you in a rush when you eat? Do you lose and gain weight on a fairly regular basis? Do you make nutritional choices in the food you eat? Do you eat when you are bored or depressed? Do you use food additives? Is your idea of a natural, good gourmet treat a six-pack and a "Big Mac"?

Physical Fitness is defined with questions like: Are you aware of your resting pulse rate, your target heart rate, your vital capacity, and your percent of body fat to lean muscle tissue? Do you participate in sporting events more than you observe? Are you familiar with minimal standards for adequacy of exercise? Do you supplement your exercise with warm-ups and cool downs? Do you enjoy physical conditioning? Do you feel good about how your body looks and feels? Do you have access to exercise facilities and do you use them? Do you derive satisfaction from going out of your way for extra exercise (taking the stairs, etc.)?

Stress Awareness and Management is defined by asking yourself questions like: Are you aware that you can moderate your blood pressure, etc.? Can you recall a time in the past week when you used deep breathing or progressive muscle control? Do you regularly employ a method of stress reduction? Do you control your own emotions when faced with an emotional situation? Are you alert to stress systems? Do you recover quickly from emotional events? Do you sleep well? Do you use visualization or other techniques to achieve more relaxed states of mind? Do you find it easy to express a full range of emotions? Can you experience failure without great upset?

Environmental Sensitivity is defined by asking yourself questions like: Do you realize the messages being sent by the media and our culture often make low level worseness a societal norm? Do you regularly enjoy a good laugh? Do you have a reasonably good picture of what your optimal health should be? Do you truly enjoy the activities in which you now spend most of your time? Do you have a positive self-concept that you over time have developed? Do you fall into the comparison trap? Are you generally willing to function assertively in order to realize your needs? Do you live and work in a supportive environment? Do you make a point to eliminate self-destructive concepts such as blame, worry, guilt, jealousy, and boredom?

The questions are meant only as a guide to show you about your lifestyle choices, practices, and to provide a benchmark from which to start to regain control of your health and life.

The Forensic Participation

Ardell (1994) stresses that there are two underlying principles of a wellness program; (1) it is positive and pro-active, and (2) it is individually based. The same must be said of any changes or adaptations we make to the forensic community and for the director's health. It must be done with a positive attitude (there is nothing more self defeating than the individual who enters a regiment of wellness with a negative disposition toward it - I am living proof). We must, as a community, provide avenues for this type of wellness to be accommodated. Additionally we must encourage directors to be aware of their health as well as be responsible for themselves. No one can make someone else care about their health. It must be self motivated and done for the correct reasons (i.e. losing weight for that special event won't change a lifestyle).

My suggestions then are merely suggestions from one who has been there, and from one whom the last several years have been a struggle to abide by some of these principles.

Programmatic Changes

Do you follow this mindset? I am a forensic educator. Thus I am here to "educate" students interested in the forensic arts. I am here to help students to learn, compete, and excel. The primary way to assess these competencies in those students is to take them to tournaments. At these tournaments, they need to compete. Now, I don't want to have them make a fool of themselves, embarrass the school, (or God forbid, be a budget suck!), and I want them to do well. Thus I push them, and me, to work harder, and to compete more. We have set certain goals for ourselves and there are certain expectations of this team (be they set by previous history, previous competitors, or departments and institutions). So we press on to do more than the next guy to get to that "next level."

The results are trying to constantly balance the educational missions of the program with the competitive pressures. We may be pressing ourselves into a schedule that cannot but result in poor health for a director as well as others.

Some possible prescriptions for program change:

- Shorten your squad's season.
- The director does not travel as much.
- Rethink the "nature" of your program (i.e. is having an integrated program worth it?)
 - Rethink the competitive and educational missions of your program.
 - Re-evaluate the program assessment measures with your administrators.
 - Hire out local judges to travel with the team.
 - Allow student team leadership to take more responsibility.

Tournament Changes

The tournament planning, preparation, coaching, and the stress that goes along with the tournament experience, I would chalk up as the most detrimental to our health and the most inhibiting to maintaining any semblance of wellness. That can be attributed to food choices, travel schedules, eating schedules, lack of exercise, and the stress of the activity.

Food

- Tournaments have begun to offer wellness snacks (fruit, non-carbonated beverages and the like). This needs to be expanded to include many other tournaments. Have your students sell the snacks and make money.
- The traditional "Continental Breakfast" that is included at so many tournaments needs to change. In some corners of the forensic community, donuts have been replaced with muffins and bagels. Coffee has been supplemented with juices and teas. To those that have made these efforts, thank you.
- Tournaments should provide restaurant lists that include alternatives to the normal fast food fare. Help those attending to find healthy food choices.

Schedule

- I don't know if I have ever dealt with a more problematic area of tournament planning than the consequences of any given schedule. In past years (after adopting a somewhat adapted version of the Arizona State schedule) we were able to accommodate (and get complimented on) the split debate and individual event schedule. At least at Wichita State, the teams attending primarily did one or the other, not both. For the debater who did extemp, it was a little bit of a challenge, but very doable. I suggest that we allow flexibility in schedule. Maybe we make decisions that don't push the time to the absolute maximum. Be realistic about things other than can you get six persuasive speeches into that round's allotted time. Make sure you plan judge "travel" time to and from the rooms, "travel" time to and from parts of campus, and try to plan in meal breaks.
- Though there is little time, perhaps we could find ways to make available exercise facilities on our campuses to the tournament participant and coaching staffs. As well, use and advertise hotels that have exercise facilities.
- Provide places that coaches/directors/judges can sit and relax. Most will search out this type of place on their own, but you might point it out.

The Expectation Changes

So often, the wellness of an individual is inhibited or deterred by the environment, but as any good motivational speaker will tell us, it is up to us. In many senses, this sage advice is one that we don't spend enough time on. When I suggest expectation changes, I am talking not only about those of the coach/director, but the team and administrators as well. My last year at WSU was very well balanced, and no frustration dominated my attitude, the attitude of the team, nor the attitude of the administrators on campus. I made public my health problems, and negotiated some changes in my schedule, my hours, and most of all the expectations of what it would take for the team to take up the slack. An increase in peer coaching sessions, video tape sessions (that could be reviewed/critiqued later), and more highly delegated responsibilities to the graduate assistant coaches, all helped in taking some of the burden off of this director's load. It took some heart to heart discussions with students to explain these principles and changes, but it was met with a great deal of compassion and understanding.

- Recognize that the director does not HAVE to do it all. You may feel like you are alone, and that even if there is assistance, it would take longer to explain it than do it yourself, but as the job gets more widely defined - the only place it will expand to is out of other parts of your life (be that family, significant relationships, or simple relaxation). Delegate, Delegate, Delegate . . .

- Rethink the expectations that students have of your role. I have had graduate students who will agree to stay and work with students until all hours of the night and into the early morning. The students begin to expect that, and when the next graduate student (who happens to be married, for example) goes home in the evening to be with their spouse, the students rebel and get frustrated and angry because their expectations of what a graduate coach should be are left unfulfilled. What do you think your role is and what do you think your students think your role is? It might tell you a lot about the stress that expectations have on you and your role.

The Bottom Line - The Individual and Priorities

"While it is true that doctors and hospitals have a significant role to play in the quality of our lives, this graph clearly indicates that it is individuals, through the choices that they make each day, that contribute the greatest percentage toward maximizing the quality of life and health. We all know that our behaviors can improve our chances for leading a long and useful life.

Collectively, all of our behaviors can be described as our lifestyle." ("In Pursuit of Wellness - Annual Report" -1990, p. 677).

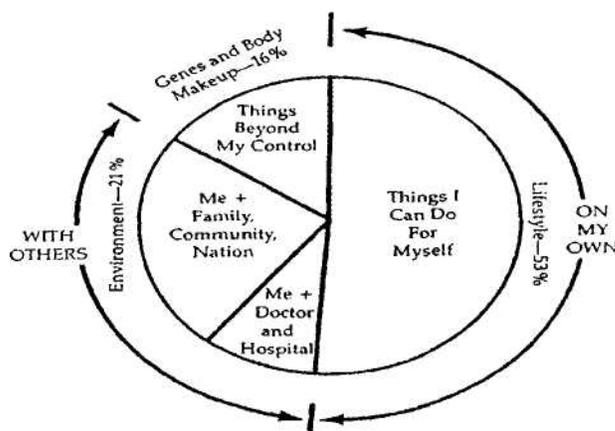


Diagram 3

There is no magic formula or miracle diet. The health and wellness issues of any individual, but especially the director of forensics, must be a constant concern. The implications have not only impacted physical well-being, but have resulted in emotional problems, and relational problems (I haven't even begun to mention the toll that being a director of forensics has on spousal and other significant relationships).

- Make wellness a conscious commitment to your own well-being.
- Avoid high-risk behaviors.
- Understand the limits of medicine.
- Realize that health is vastly more than not being sick.
- Understand and accept what you can and cannot control.
- Use your will power to overcome temptations.
- Set realistic expectations, and negotiate them with others.
- Eradicate "no-win" thinking.

Conclusion

We are a smart group of people. But for a group of smart people, health professionals would look at our lifestyles and cringe (and start ringing up the dollar signs from the treatments to come, no doubt). We have seen the statistics for years that claim the benefits of physical activity (and that means more than climbing the stairs to a second floor competition room, or walking several hundred yards to that "far-away" building). We have read about (and heard many a

persuasive round) on the foods that are healthy for us. We have listened to countless hours of experts tell us about how good we will feel if wellness is a part of our lives. As smart as we are, we may need to take the blinders off and start listening to our own bodies.

This very personal account has tried to address some of the concerns that face the health of the director of forensics. If we as a community wish to increase the longevity of our leadership, wellness will have to become a priority, with the members of the community looking for ways to effectively encourage those that have made it important.

The last visit to the doctor was encouraging. Blood pressure is down (medicated still, but down), the heart sounds good. I feel better because of exercise and eating healthier. Still have a few pounds to go (okay, be realistic, more than a few), but with wellness as a priority, I am ready to live longer for my wife, my sons, and myself. It is an issue that is much bigger and more important than just forensics, but it is one that the forensic community needs to address, to keep the activity, its participants and its coaches healthy for years to come.

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Forensics and the "New" Wellness

Susan Hatfield, Winona State University

Ten years ago, wellness on college campuses (with a few notable exceptions like Maricopa Community College, Ball State, and University of Wisconsin Stevens Point) essentially consisted of an occasional table tent in the dining hall with nutrition information and a converted storage room in the basement of a residence hall outfitted with the football team's cast-off exercise equipment. Wellness communities, made up of a handful of faculty and student "true believers" struggled against the university culture to stake out non-smoking dining rooms, television lounges and residence hall floors in public buildings that were supposed to be (by law) "smoke free" already. Those who promoted wellness were viewed with cynicism, their behaviors covertly monitored for any impure act that would destroy their credibility and hence, their impact. For a wellness promoter on campus, being seen eating french fries or drinking a beer at a picnic was viewed as the ultimate hypocrisy.

As Donald Ardell (1997) points out, information promoting wellness in companies and universities was almost always more like traditional health education and prevention, focused on reducing risks, assessing problems, and issuing dire warnings. The primary messages were based in medical models (recovery) and prevention models ("be well so you don't get sick") with an emphasis on the bottom line ("stay healthy and save us money in health care premiums"). As Ardell (1997) stated, "Too little so-called wellness was about insights for liberating people to think for themselves and recognize how to profit from embracing responsibility rather than deflecting it to someone else. Too little wellness was addressed to issues associated with optimal psychological and physical functioning" (p. 69). In essence, wellness *seemed* to be about becoming a vegetarian tri-athlete (with less than 8% body fat) in an effort to either overcome or ward off a myriad of other health problems and save the company money. Though widely held, this was a simplistic and inaccurate perception of wellness.

Clearly, there were a number of problems endemic in this perception. Mary Anne Benton (1993) outlined several:

1. People became universally concerned that they could never be "good enough" when it came to their personal health and well-being.
2. Health and wellness practitioners over emphasized the physical aspects of health and virtually ignored the social, emotional, and spiritual aspects.
3. There was enormous prejudice against various behaviors and traits, most especially smokers and those who were overweight.
4. Dissecting the problem was emphasized more than integrating the solution.
5. Rules seemed designed to protect people from themselves, which destroyed trust in themselves and discredited their own judgment.
6. Wellness was over-moralized and over-medicalized.

It was into this context, ten years ago, that the first paper integrating wellness and forensics was introduced at the National Development Conference on Forensics in Denver, Colorado by Hatfield, Hatfield and Carver (1989). Using tournament management as a starting point, this paper outlined a number of strategies that could be employed during a tournament to help forensics become a more 'well' activity. As anyone familiar with the paper and its response knows, the paper was widely discussed, not to mention wildly lampooned (e.g. as "the banana bread paper").

What a Difference a Decade Makes

A new understanding of wellness emerged in the 1990's which is more holistic, approachable, achievable, and *moderate*. Wellness is no longer presented or perceived as an emphasis upon super-fitness (which it never really was). Wellness is starting to be understood as an integrated sense of the whole person. Wellness has moved from a "no pain, no gain," model based on physical fitness and medical metaphors emphasizing risk factor reduction and competition to a pleasure model, emphasizing enjoyment in all aspects of one's life. While risk factors are still important, the new understanding of wellness is less about testing and diagnostics and more about play and communication. It is less about goals and more about processes. It is about enjoying life.

While the traditional dimensions of wellness have remained the same (Social, Physical, Emotional, Intellectual, Occupational, Spiritual), the wellness wheel has moved from an abstract, visual model to a concept that illustrates and embraces the synergistic nature of the dimensions. Simply, the wheel doesn't work well unless all of the spokes are in place.

Karen Carrier (1996) succinctly contrasts the new paradigm of wellness with the old:

Traditional Model

- Focus on physical parts
- Disease and avoidance themes
- Clinical and diagnostic emphasis
- Competitive approach
- External behavioral controls
- Goal orientation
- Autocratic professional style
- Cultural conformity demanded

Holistic Wellness Model

- Focus on physical/mental/ social "whole"
- Pleasure and growth themes
- Reduced clinical and diagnostic emphasis
- Cooperative approach
- Internal behavioral cues
- Process orientation
- Synergistic professional style
- Cultural diversity supported

The new wellness is proactive rather than reactive, inclusive and accessible to laypersons rather than the exclusive, privileged domain of just a few experts. It is not prescriptive - that is, it does not claim to have a rigidly-defined cluster of ideas, skills and goals which everyone must embrace in precisely the same way in order to be well. Rather, it involves a philosophy of self-respect and self-care that can be accessed by different persons in different ways, then nurtured

and extended into other areas of their lives. Wellness becomes an ongoing life style choice, not a one-time or intermittent prescription. It is predicated on persons' active involvement in behavior and choices that will empower them to live full, responsible, rewarding lives in an extremely complex world (Hatfield & Hatfield, 1992).

Wellness is a process which involves the striving for balance and integration in one's life, adding and refining skills, rethinking previous beliefs and stances toward issues as appropriate. Wellness is about growing. A person truly involved in wellness does not get "there"; they are always on the way, in process, alive and participating (Hatfield & Hatfield, 1992).

This change in the definition and philosophy of wellness has also been evident on college campuses. Wellness Centers and Life Centers are one of the most frequent building projects at universities across the country. These centers feature not only state-of-the-art exercise equipment but also offer counseling, nutrition, and other student support services. Distribution requirement physical education classes based on one specific activity are being replaced by lifestyle management courses in which fitness is but one aspect, along with stress management, nutrition, financial management, mediation, and career counseling. In some cases these centers and classes are funded by students, voluntarily assessing themselves additional fees.

Wellness and Development

Hatfield and Hatfield (1992) pointed out that the overarching goals of wellness lend themselves extremely well to a cognitive-developmental model. In order to make wellness truly accessible, the wellness community needs to think developmentally. Both developmental psychology and wellness speak to personal, individual empowerment; both speak to the promotion of humane relationships, organizations and systems; both speak to the vital need to focus on human skills and resources in the increasingly complex and interrelated problems of an ever-shrinking global community. The cognitive-developmental model focuses on the ongoing, overall development of a person. This development empowers individuals to live freely and fully in a complex world.

Developmentalism, like wellness, also is proactive, prevention-oriented rather than remedial in nature. It begins with the assumption that one must take people where they are as a starting point, then build on their capacities in growth-promoting ways which extend or "stretch" their functioning to become more complex. Simply, one can't give directions to anyone unless they know the point from which the other is starting (Hatfield & Hatfield, 1992).

All people are growing and can grow, given the appropriate combination of support and challenge in the environment. Development can be seen as a process that can and must continue through the life span. Like wellness, it never ceases. "Teachable moments" occur continuously, and can inform and refine the overall growth and development of the person - intellectual, moral, interpersonal, conceptual, spiritual.

Wellness and Forensics: That was Then, This is Now

And just as a new understanding of wellness has emerged over the past decade, so has a new attitude toward integrating wellness and forensics. The integration is now referred to as a "movement" which began with the presentation of the original paper at the developmental conference. Since that time, numerous papers have been presented examining the relationship. Convention panels are devoted exclusively to the wellness and forensics. This journal is a testament to the trend. A cynic would say that some of this interest is simply a relatively easy topic for those in forensics to write their theses or build their resumes with conference presentations. An optimist would believe that this interest is genuine and that the concept of wellness has finally gained a critical mass of support in the forensics community, to the point where positive change in the culture is possible.

Forensics and Academic Wellness

In 1997, Hatfield introduced the concept of Academic Wellness at the National Wellness Conference held in Stevens Point, Wisconsin. Academic Wellness was posited as an integrative concept, defined as the result of the successful, positive implementation of accepted principles of good practice by both faculty and students. The concept of Academic Wellness was based upon the circular nature of the traditional components of wellness (the wellness wheel) and how they could achieve Academic Wellness if there was a balance among all aspects of a student's life — on campus, off campus, in class, and out of class. The integrative nature of academic wellness is apparent to most faculty advisors (and forensics coaches). It is not difficult to tell when something is happening (or "out of balance") in a student's life. Behaviors, attitudes, and performance levels change.

The concept of Academic Wellness was based upon the Seven Principles of Good Practice in Undergraduate Education. This developmental model specifically related to undergraduate education has direct application to forensics and wellness. These principles, first developed by a team of renowned educators led by Zelda Gamson and Arthur Chickering, were designed to be accessible, understandable, practical, and widely applicable (interestingly, the same goals as the wellness movement). They identify a model for students to get the most out of their university experience, and serve as the teaching / learning model on numerous campuses across the country.

The final version of the Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education first appeared as the lead article in the March 1987 issue of the AAHE Bulletin (Chickering & Gamson, 1987). It began by drawing attention to criticisms of undergraduate education and moved quickly to an emphasis on campus-level improvement, listing the Seven Principles and then describing them in greater detail, with practical examples from a variety of campuses. The response to the article was immediate, and plans began soon after to re-publish it as a special section in the June 1987 issue of The Wingspread Journal, a publication of The Johnson Foundation. Since 1987, hundreds of

thousands of copies of the principles have been distributed internationally.

The Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education, as identified by Chickering and Gamson (1987), are:

1. Good practice encourages student-faculty contact.
2. Good practice encourages cooperation among students.
3. Good practice encourages active learning.
4. Good practice gives prompt feedback.
5. Good practice emphasizes time on task.
6. Good practice communicates high expectations.
7. Good practice respects diverse talents and ways of learning.

Participation in forensics activities seems to be in alignment with many of the principles and vice versa. Forensics participation has the potential to play an important role in a student's academic wellness. However, it is critically important that forensics coaches and administrators not be blinded to the fact that there are still many ways in which forensics undercuts these principles and that vigilance is necessary to promote the overall wellness of forensics participants and coaches.

1. Student-Faculty Contact

Sturnick and Conners (1995) note that the first of the Seven Principles seems almost axiomatic. That students tend to benefit from interaction with faculty seems obvious. Besides the ample research-based documentation of the importance of student-faculty interactions, Sturnick and Conners point out that the romanticized image of the ideal teacher-learner relationship is part of a university's cultural tradition. The authors also note that, "heroic depictions of teachers in literature, on film and on televisions have reinforced the notion that magical connections between teachers and students can produce glorious academic achievement and transform lives" (1995, p. 9). Unfortunately, the reality doesn't come close to this image on many campuses and classrooms. Many university students continue to move through their college careers feeling little more than a student ID number.

Few activities on a college campus (except for perhaps a few sports) bring faculty and students together in both formal and informal situations as much as forensics. The length of the season, combined with the nature of the travel, often create strong bonds between and among team and faculty members. It is this interaction that in turn creates strong relationships between former forensics students and their universities. To the extent that appropriate boundaries in those relationships are respected, forensics is an example of this principle at its best.

2. Cooperation Among Students

Traditional university practice has involved conscious efforts to stimulate competition among students in order to promote their learning. With honorable intentions, fueled by myths ranging from competition as the best preparation a student can have for a "survival of the fittest" world, to competition as a key

builder of character, college classrooms - and forensics tournaments - have been places where competition has reigned. The natural result of this competition is that some students "win" and many students "lose." That is what competition is all about (Hatfield & Hatfield, 1995, p. 23). Unfortunately, competition does not create the kind of cooperative communities in which students will be expected to be able to function socially and professionally following graduation.

Cooperative experience is a foundation of many collegiate forensics programs. Even though the tournaments are highly competitive, many campus' forensics programs feature strong elements of cooperative learning practice: peer coaching, and collaborative research and work sessions in addition to the cooperative skills learned from traveling and living together on weekend tournaments. The attitude of the forensics coach is crucial in creating and maintaining a cooperatively spirited team / community. Assuming that bringing together a diverse group of students and keeping them together for six months (during which time they will work, travel, eat and live together) will automatically result in the creation of a 'team' in the true sense of the word is unrealistic. A cooperatively spirited 'team' needs to be nurtured by the coach and the senior members of the team - it doesn't just happen. The team members need to be taught that they are accountable to each other, and the coach is accountable to each one of them. It is that simple and that complex.

Further, the cooperative approach involves a commitment to a longer-term process of setting expectations and teaching cooperation skills during the course of the forensics season. The fundamental rules of a cooperative community will be foreign to the students who will need to be taught the new set of behaviors to go along with the rules. The cooperative behaviors, in turn, will need to be reinforced and rewarded. It takes time to build the kind of forensics team in which students truly become invested in the greater good of all members rather than individual gains or rewards.

Cooperative experiences are an important part of a student's intellectual and personal growth. Few skills besides the ability to communicate effectively and work well with others in a productive manner will have as much impact on an individual's future and career. Because forensics is so highly competitive (both externally and sometimes internally), coaches need to actively facilitate cooperative forensics communities - communities where everyone can "win" (Hatfield & Hatfield, 1995, p. 28).

3. Active Learning

Many college classrooms generally don't promote active learning. When faced with the confines of the academic calendar and ever increasing amounts of information, it becomes obvious how lecturing becomes an attractive mode of instruction. It is economical in terms of use of course time and number of students that can be served, it can be planned out in advance, it can be reused over and over, and it lets the teacher remain "in control" of the situation. Lectures leave little to chance. Students are moved from concept to concept, idea to idea, without an understanding of how the information relates to their own lives or the

lives of others, or how it has influenced the past, present, or future (Brown and Ellison, p. 39-40). And while lecture might be a very attractive method for teaching, it is not an effective way to learn.

Forensics participation is a great example of the principle of active learning. Ideally, forensics allows students the opportunity to explore new ideas, conduct research, integrate information from a variety of sources, and relate the ideas to what's happening in their lives and the lives of others. It is both 'active' and 'learning.'

In order to be effective, active learning must become an attitude on the part of both forensics students and coaches. Somehow, the process needs to be valued as highly as the result - even though it is only the results that bring home trophies. Active learning can best take place when coaches are aware that they are responsible for assisting their students' research and creative processes in a developmental way and when students assume responsibility for engaging in the speech construction process, instead of merely plugging information into formulas or templates. As this happens, our students will start the journey toward becoming lifelong learners.

4. Prompt Feedback

Feedback is a familiar concept to most educators and the basic element of forensics. As defined by Benson, Mattson & Adler (1995), feedback is any procedure used to inform a learner of the degree of appropriateness or correctness of a response to an instructional stimulus. What is crucial to the definition is that the learner is informed and can associate the feedback with a particular or specific response. To that end, truly useful feedback is that which is specific, timely, and clear.

Valuable feedback can come from a variety of sources. Students critiquing each other's speeches helps sharpen critical thinking skills, as well as the ability to articulate feedback appropriately. Student's self analysis provides the opportunity for critical self-evaluation and the identification of a personal plan for improvement. Feedback from coaches allows for yet an additional perspective on the speech performance, content and structure.

While prompt feedback is useful, the timing of feedback needs to be considered carefully. To be genuinely helpful, feedback needs to come at the time when students can best learn from it. For many of our students, receiving feedback after two days of competition isn't particularly helpful. For students who have multiple entries, remembering back to a specific round in which to ground the feedback is nearly impossible. Likewise, feedback provided only at the end of the tournament doesn't allow for any mid course corrections. Most forensics students have received ballots at the end of the tournament all pointing to the same issue (e.g. being overtime), something that might have been easily corrected in later rounds, if only the feedback had been provided "in time."

5. Time on Task

Time on task, while one of the most basic principles, is also one of the hard-

est to achieve. As Vorkink (1995) points out, a combination of college and university level efforts to create a diverse population of traditional and non-traditional learners, as well as economic realities facing all students has created a population for whom achieving time on task is a significant challenge. Many of our students are placed under tremendous strain as they try to balance significant demands of classes, jobs, and in many cases families, while pursuing their college education and attempting any participation in co-curricular activities. For these students, the time demands of forensics alone make even limited participation impossible.

For those students who can devote the time, participation in forensics is a valuable experience in this principle. Working with the same piece over a period of time and (in theory, anyway), revising it based upon new information and feedback is a classic demonstration of student time on task. It seems a safe assumption that few students devote the same amount of effort to most class assignments.

It is important that students in general and forensics students in particular be assisted in making best use of the often limited time students have available to devote to forensics.

Several questions arise. First, how can students be helped to maximize their use of the time they have available? Second, how can coaches facilitate effective use of time on task? And finally, how can the national forensics organizations be persuaded to address the time issue in terms of length of the season and number of national tournaments?

According to Vorkink (1995, p. 70), most institutions assume that students already know how to use their time productively, though the high school experience seldom prepares students for the time demands of collegiate life. Opportunities for students to improve their time management skills should be part of every student development program and reinforced by every instructor and forensics coach.

Finally, national forensics organizations need to consider the parameters of the season and the number of competing national tournaments that can effectively keep a student off campus and out of classes for three weeks during the spring. Many students' academic wellness comes into serious jeopardy in the spring when the demands of forensics start to overshadow all of their other commitments and obligations. It is up to forensics coaches and the national organizations to help alleviate this problem.

6. High Expectations

High expectations don't automatically result in higher student aspirations and greater student achievement. It takes talent, motivation, and experience in order for high expectations to produce results (Scott & Tobe, 1995). And as all forensics coaches know, not all students have equal talent. Any amount of encouragement and hours spent coaching will be moderated by the student's talent and ability. But coaches need to *believe* that all students can do better, even if not equally well. It is the role of the coach to encourage this improvement, not

necessarily expect national tournament breaks and trophies for all students.

Many programs welcome students who are participating in forensics for their own personal and professional growth as a speaker. Many programs do not. Even though all students can achieve growth through forensics, many programs and coaches still prefer to concentrate their energies and budget on those students who will "show me the hardware!"

A forensics program grounded in wellness recognizes that each participant has the opportunity to achieve personal growth through the activity - regardless of the outcome of the circuit.

7. Respect for Diverse Talents and Ways of Learning

Designing programs to accommodate a diverse population of students is a critical task. Just as the indicators of institutions' efforts to diversify the student population becomes apparent on our campuses and classrooms, the results of these efforts can be seen on forensics teams as well. And we know that the differences are much deeper than the age, gender, race or nationalities of our students.

Forensics can both nurture and respond to diversity. Good practice should recognize, respect and reward a wide range of individual styles and choices in forensics events.

Conclusion

It is too early to tell what impact the new understanding and interest in wellness will have on the forensics community. On the one hand, forensics seems to support the practice of accepted principles of undergraduate education, contributing to a student's overall academic wellness. But that support can be tenuous. Student-faculty contact needs to respect boundaries. A cooperative spirit needs to be actively nurtured, not just assumed. Emphasis needs to be placed on the educational processes of forensics (active learning) and not just the result. The timing of feedback might need to be rethought to allow for mid-course correction. Time on task needs to be kept to within reasonable limits. Programs need to remain developmental in their focus, allowing students at all levels to benefit from the experience. And respect for individual differences in style and taste needs to be nurtured.

Wellness has come a long way over the past ten years. A broader understanding of the concept and reality of wellness has finally taken hold in the public consciousness. This new understanding is more forgiving and moderate than the previous interpretation that was seen by many as an unachievable ideal that was based upon fear, deprivation, guilt and obsessiveness. This new wellness follows a developmental model in which the process is important, if not more important, than the result. It takes a holistic approach emphasizing the synergistic relationship between the many components of wellness (Social, Physical, Emotional, Intellectual, Occupational, and Spiritual).

Forensics participation can contribute positively to students' and coaches'

lives and well-being. By adopting wellness as a fundamental tenant of all college forensics programs, forensics can enhance each participant's quest for personal wellness, not undermine it.

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The AFA-NIET Initiatives on Wellness: Helping a Nation Make Better Choices

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The mid-1990s had seen extensive discussion in formal and informal settings on the topic of wellness. Most of us by that time had begun to feel the effects of a season that was twice as lengthy as most athletic (or any other) activities and with fewer resources to smooth the long road. There were stories of director burnout, where coaches would leave the activity to pursue the simple pleasures of a normal romantic relationship or family, a day or two off each month, a more profitable position in the academy, and three square meals each day, none of which included french fries or potato chips (Gill, 1990). Interestingly enough, when a coach would leave the activity, entire programs would begin to die, providing more support for the belief that most forensics programs are driven by the interest and sacrifice of the director (and the lure of success) rather than by the mission of the institution (Workman, 1997).

In an effort to understand the slow but distinct march of both debate and individual events toward extinction, the American Forensic Association National Individual Events Tournament Committee established a Sub-committee on Wellness chaired by Dr. Cynthia Carver. The sub-committee, composed of members from the NIET Committee, sought feedback from their districts and fashioned solutions to minimize wellness concerns. Several District Chairs, myself included, composed legislation for a national wellness policy for the AFA-NIET.

District IV's proposal, which eventually became transformed into the AFA-NIET Wellness Initiatives for Tournament Directors (approved April, 1997), was based on four basic assumptions:

- 1) Threats to personal wellness exist both at the tournament and program level. An approach to wellness must address the unhealthy attitudes and behaviors found in the daily activity of the individual program, yet such behaviors are often perpetuated by the structure of the tournament. It is the design of the local tournament that influences student preparation in multiple events, hours of travel (and the impact on safety), and opportunities for sufficient amounts of sleep and nutrition. In other words, the ways in which local tournaments are designed and scheduled affect the wellness of students for far more than the length of the two or three-day competitions. Focus, therefore, was placed on those who design and direct local, regional and national tournaments.

- 2) In essence, there is no legitimate way to define or legislate wellness. The Hardiness Studies of the University of Chicago found that stress and the detrimental effects of stress on physical and mental health varied dramatically from person, culture, and population. Some thrived in "high stress" environments while others wilted (Lindsey and Hills, 1992). Though there are schedules that would exhaust the "hardest" among us, determining the health risks associ-

ated with any tournament is a matter of individual coach perception, experience, and choice. It is ultimately the coach who must "shop around" for tournaments that offer an excellent competitive experience (Schnoor and Alexander, 1997), and the NIET guidelines were an attempt to add the dimension of wellness as a part of that choice-making. The coach, however, must determine what is healthy or unhealthy for that particular set of students on that particular weekend.

3) The NIET, with limited jurisdiction over individual tournaments and no control over the season schedule or the attitudes and behaviors of individual programs as they attend local tournaments, could only provide a set of guidelines that would serve as a national model for healthier competition. As seen in the second assumption, choices about what is or is not healthy for any group of students are difficult to operationalize, much less legislate. Needless to say, they are impossible to enforce. We fell strongly that the NIET had no authority to determine the length of the competitive season or the design of individual tournaments. Instead, as an association of member programs, the NIET could provide those members who direct local tournaments with approaches to healthier tournaments thereby encouraging healthier tournament designs. Our hope was that as tournaments became more "wellness-friendly," those tournaments that were unhealthy in design would lose support and attendance to those that provided good competition without impaired student and coach performance both at the tournament and back at home.

4) In order to impact wellness on a national level, the AFA-NIET would need to practice what it preached. The guidelines produced for tournament directors would be those that could also be put in place at the national tournament, making that tournament a healthier environment as well.

There is little doubt that these guidelines will, in time, evolve and change as new insights to the threats to individual and group wellness become better understood by those of us who are involved in the activity. Whether these initiatives can slow down the sad exodus of coaches and students to healthier extra- and co-curricular activities remains to be seen. For now, the initiatives serve as a small but manageable first step toward solving a national problem.

Notes

There are a number of excellent references to this research. The quickest route to learning more about the hardiness model and the initial study can be found at the Hardiness Institute's web page, located at <http://www.hardinessinstitute.com/model.htm>

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AFA-NIET WELLNESS INITIATIVES FOR TOURNAMENT DIRECTORS

(Approved by the AFA-NIET Committee, April, 1997)

1. Tournament directors should schedule tournaments and tournament formats in consideration of the regional activity surrounding the date of the tournament, working to create a regional schedule that fosters a variety of tournament formats which allow students and coaches time during weekends to spend at home or campus.

2. Tournament directors should schedule tournaments where no competition round begins before 8:00 a.m. or after 6:30 p.m., applied equally to all competitors (debaters, extemporaneous speakers, etc.). Adequate time should be created between rounds to allow short breaks between rounds and to avoid rushing for participants who are double-entered.

3. Tournament directors should create a schedule that allows meal breaks during normal eating hours on all days of competition, applied equally to all competitors.

4. Tournament directors should facilitate the availability of "healthy" food choices during the tournament, including breakfast, snacks, and other times when food is provided or area restaurants are recommended.

5. Tournament directors should hire ample amounts of hired judges in order to create a schedule where all coaches attending a tournament are provided with a minimum of one round off per day of competition.

6. Tournament directors should provide a lounge(s) that is available at all times of competition to allow students, coaches, and judges a comfortable atmosphere to relax or rest between rounds or during off rounds.

7. When evening activities are scheduled, tournament directors should promote activities that do not hinder wellness initiatives, being mindful of activity elements which might limit a full night's rest or might encourage unhealthy practices (consumption of alcohol, tobacco, etc.).

8. Tournament directors should offer options to the conventional pentathlon sweepstakes system, encouraging students to participate in fewer events by offering triathlon or general individual sweepstakes (similar to the AFA-NIET system) or eliminating pentathlon awards entirely.

A Perspective on Wellness: Personal Reflections from an Active Member of Multiple National Forensic Organizations

Larry Schnoor, Minnesota State University-Mankato (Emeritus)

In August of 1988, the first Developmental Conference on Individual Events was held at the Executive Tower Inn, in Denver, Colorado. The conference was attended by approximately eighty forensic professionals from twenty-five different states. Conference participants presented papers related to numerous topic areas ranging from forensic pedagogy to definitions and practices in forensic events and competition. However, the authors of one position paper had little knowledge at the time that their paper would be the beginning of a movement in forensics that is still drawing attention today. Their paper, entitled "Integrating Wellness and Forensics: Tournament Management as a Starting Point" presented the forensic community with material related to the wellness of participants as well as the activity of forensics. The paper, later published in the conference proceedings, concluded with suggestions and challenges to the forensics community. (Hatfield, Hatfield and Carver, 1989)

It is with a review of that paper, that I approached the status of wellness as it has been considered by two of the national speech organizations with which I have been affiliated. As a long-time member of both the AFA-NIET and NFA, I thought it would be worthwhile to examine the recommendations contained in the Hatfield, Hatfield, and Carver paper in light of actions that have been taken by either or both of these two national organizations.

One of the first items mentioned in the paper was the consideration of the length of the tournament season as well as the number of tournaments that are scheduled. Sound familiar? There have been numerous discussions on the IE-List Serve as well as at many forensics tournaments on that very topic. The presenters in 1988 suggested that an obvious solution would simply be to hold fewer tournaments. Has this happened? I am afraid not. An examination of the current tournament calendars published by either AFA or NFA clearly reveals that the number of tournaments has actually increased, with more of them now taking place also on a Sunday. However, both AFA and NFA have contributed to the shortening of the forensic season by moving their respective tournament dates a week earlier in the season than when they first originated. The Interstate Oratorical Association has also joined this movement by scheduling its tournament in the last weekend in April rather than the first weekend in May.

Additional changes made by the AFA-NIET and NFA have included revision of the schedule of their respective tournaments in consideration of wellness factors. In past years, the business meetings for both coaches and students held during the NFA were conducted during the evening of one of the days of competition. These meetings would often last for hours, running very late into the evening, with competition starting very early the next day. That has been changed. The NFA business meetings are now scheduled in the early afternoon, during a break period between rounds of Lincoln-Douglas Debate and Individual

Events. This change has created a more human approach that gives both students and coaches time to eat lunch, participate in the business meeting, and still maintain a reasonable time schedule for competition for that day of the tournament. The AFA-NIET has also changed its meeting for the national committee to be held on the day prior to the start of the tournament, instead of happening at the same time as events on the first day of the tournament. Both of these changes have contributed to the wellness of participants in terms of less stress and better use of time.

The times of the individual rounds have also been an item of concern. With the number of students double-entered, and at the NFA Tournament, possibly triple entered, trying to have rounds scheduled on the basis of one hour and fifteen minutes per round proved to be a source of stress, in addition to inhibiting opportunities for getting something to eat or drink. Both of these national organizations have moved to increase the time frame for rounds to an hour and a half, allowing needed time between rounds. Both AFA and NFA have held to a schedule that does not start rounds before 8:00 a.m.

In 1997 during the national committee meeting for the AFA-NIET at the University of Texas, Arlington, wellness issues occupied a considerable amount of time and discussion. An outgrowth of that discussion, was the creation and approval of a set of guidelines for tournament directors designed to increase the wellness of forensic competition.

Both the AFA and NFA recognize that they do not have the authority to impose regulations on forensic programs, especially since many programs do not affiliate with either of these two national organizations. The AFA and NFA can only regulate and enforce rules that affect their own national tournaments. They have, however, put forth suggestions for the forensic community at-large to consider with the hope that individual program and tournament directors will consider them in the management of their respective programs and tournaments.

Much can be said about wellness initiatives. True wellness in relationship to forensics will only be achieved if each of us gives it the attention that it deserves. There are questions and concerns that still need to be addressed. One of those is the definition of wellness itself. Should it be defined in terms of the physical health of each individual, the mental health of each individual, or both? Or should we even make these distinctions? Can wellness be linked to the diversity of the participants in the activity or the diversity of the activity itself? Is there a link between wellness and the pedagogical and competitive mood of the activity? Should it be defined in terms of the activity itself, what activities contribute to wellness and which do not? How can the wellness of the activity be addressed in a manner that still allows for programs to meet their goals and expectations? Should the Council of Forensic Organizations play a larger role in the establishment of guidelines or even regulations that would promote wellness in forensics?

These are not easy questions to answer. They all involve issues with ethical concerns and ultimately must be approached by directors, coaches, judges and student participants in the choices made by each as they participate in foren-

sics. However, one thing is clear. The choice must be made to promote wellness. The activity and those that participate must become more aware of the positive elements of a well and healthy approach if the activity and participants are to continue to grow in a productive manner. This special journal issue is a positive step in that direction. Just as a conference paper presented in 1988 began the process of examination, let us hope that this issue of the *National Forensic Journal* will continue that dialogue.

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**Nutritious, Plentiful, Easily Accessible, and (Especially) Free: A
Modest Experiment in Wellness**

Mary Trejo, The University of Texas at El Paso

Observed at a Southern tournament on a chilly autumn day: Several students in full competition dress are huddled under a stand of pecan trees in the center of campus, stooping to gather and eat pecans fallen on the ground. When asked why, they explain that there is no food available within walking distance, and their coach has made no arrangements to have snacks brought in to them. In short, they are hungry.

While few forensic tournaments are as devoid of opportunities for nourishment as the actual situation described above, the link between nutrition and achievement, in spite of the current interest in wellness, is still given insufficient consideration. The following scene is replayed at almost every tournament. In the first hours, the competitors' spirits are high, their resolve to achieve, strong. Carefully dressed, painstakingly accessorized, their faces glow with health, and their eyes shine with energy and hope. They are the best and the brightest, and nothing seems impossible to them. After as little as 48 hours, the setting is unchanged, but the players are altered. Those who are the most experienced demonstrate the hallmarks of survivors, presenting themselves as impeccably as before, having learned how to care for themselves in order to surmount the rigors of many competition weekends. These savvy persons often become our winners, empowering their infinitely practiced performances with reservoirs of carefully tended energy. They are in the minority. Most have undergone an alteration, which, despite their considerable determination and courage, is, quite simply, physical. No matter how much heart they have, their strength has been depleted not only by the enormous expenditures required by performances, but by inadequate replenishment through sleep and nutrition.

To be young, as most intercollegiate competitors are, is to believe oneself invincible, yet we as forensics coaches see this bright, creative segment of our college population brought down again and again by inattention to the most mundane yet profound truth, that it is necessary to nurture the body in order to have the full service of the mind. Our tournament culture has evolved as an unhealthy culture, generations of competitors and coaches having bought into the myth that champions are made of all night practice sessions, strong coffee, and sheer determination, that hardships like going hungry and being deprived of sleep are part of the winning experience. The forensic community's current discussion of wellness is an indication of the growing awareness of this problem.

Controlling the area of sleep deprivation is not an option available to tournament directors, beyond choosing to adhere to sensible tournament schedule guidelines, as exemplified by the 1997 AFA-NIET recommendations. However, a tournament director's hospitality effort can control nutrition to a large degree during tournament hours, contributing to physical and emotional well-being and thereby enhancing not only performance quality but the shared tournament expe-

rience for all. Also, the concept of a mutual and equitable experience can be extended to avoidance of the custom of supplying judges and students with differing calibers of refreshment. I suggest that the healthier option is to offer the same foodstuffs to all tournament participants, reasoning that the active appetites of our competitors should not be a justification for restraint in hospitality. In order to avoid lengthening the tournament day by scheduling set meal times, which could negatively impact wellness by robbing participants of sleep, I believe that the ideal solution is a lounge, nutritiously if not elegantly stocked, that remains open to everyone not only for breakfast but throughout the competition hours. Of course, this all takes money.

When I was elected Chair of AFA-NIET District IX in 1998, I reasoned that I was in a position to implement some of my observations about nutritional wellness into the setting of the yearly district qualifying tournament. My objective was to impact wellness by offering free food, enough to make a difference in the totality of the tournament experience for District IX competitors. No full-blown open wellness lounge had ever been tried at this tournament, although in some previous years continental breakfast items had been served.

The first order of business was to find sufficient resources to attempt the experiment, since District coffers are not deep. I reasoned that the traditional Saturday night coaches' party was not only costly, since it customarily featured hors d'oeuvres and alcohol, but expendable. This late-night event utilized both resources and time in a two-day tournament weekend schedule that included a Sunday luncheon for coaches and judges and a District coaches' meeting. I consulted with each member of the District IX Committee to see if any disagreed with eliminating the coaches' party and using the hosting resources on a wellness lounge. Two members objected until assured that the expenditures would not tap District resources; other committee responses ranged from accommodation to enthusiasm. In recent years, the District IX qualifying tournament has become a hotel tournament, coordinated by the District Chair, with the school volunteering to serve as the "host" school shouldering a large portion of the hospitality expenses. In March 1998 the host school was Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff, Arizona, which utilized a faculty donation to fund a District IX Wellness Lounge throughout competition hours both Saturday and Sunday. Full accessibility to healthy food at all hours was my primary request, and our host complied with graciousness and generosity.

Foods offered free both days to all tournament participants included both caffeine and non-caffeine drinks, juice, and canned sodas; fruit, primarily apples, oranges, and grapes; assorted cookies, a variety of snack chips, and a prodigious quantity of granola bars. In addition, on Sunday submarine-type cold meat and vegetable sandwiches were brought into the wellness lounge in such ample proportions that leftovers could still be seen after the Awards Assembly. The fare was nutritious but not lavish; what distinguished its presentation was the fact that it remained available throughout tournament hours and, when depleted by heavy demand, was replenished. Competitor reactions solicited informally ranged from

simple expressions of gratitude to reporting a heightened feeling of well-being. If success is measured in terms of crowds of eager, hungry people vying to eat between every round, the 1998 District IX wellness food experiment was a success.

Reflection has provided insight into opportunities for improvement at future tournaments. First, a fiscally responsible way to encourage the funding of a more substantial selection of edibles should be found. Second, student responses identified the room used for the wellness room as inadequate. A larger, more open space must be found, as the overwhelming consumer response resulted in an uncomfortable crush which displeased all and limited opportunities to interact. Third, the location and open availability of the wellness lounge to all participants needs to be advertised more effectively, for even though the response to the lounge was enthusiastic, some complained they did not learn of it in time to participate fully. All reactions shared a common theme: we want more! Dealing with these opportunities for improvement creatively and constructively should produce positive results for District IX's next modest experiment in wellness.

Creating a Wellness Tournament

Clark Olson, Arizona State University

It's no secret that the rigors of forensic tournaments compromise wellness. However, there are many practical steps which tournament directors can take which incorporate wellness opportunities into their tournaments to help create a healthy atmosphere for all participants. This essay will focus on the tournament schedule, tournament activities and practices, and tournament food and beverages.

Tournament Schedule

Too often, tournaments have tried to cram into a two or three day schedule all forensic activities known to humankind. Initially, directors should focus on offering only the events at their tournament they can reasonably schedule in their allotted time schedule, perhaps not including four styles of debate and all the "traditional" individual events, plus experimental events. For those few tournaments that do still offer both debate and individual events, creating a split schedule, so participants can focus on one activity or the other for a significant block of time while having a break during the corresponding events can make for a manageable day (e.g. debate from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and all individual events from 2:00-6:30 p.m.). Most students today have chosen to focus their participation on a single facet of the activity, so while as forensic educators we may be philosophically committed to both, creating a tournament that includes both can be a unique, though not impossible challenge. Consciously choosing which events to offer will make creating a healthy schedule easier.

Perhaps the biggest consideration when crafting a healthy tournament schedule is the wise use of time. Too often tournaments have been scheduled solely around classroom availability instead of considering the health of the respective participants. Initially, when deciding on the beginning time of a tournament, directors should be cognizant of the distance and mode of transportation that tournament participants have covered or used. If the majority of tournament participants are driving to the tournament the morning competition begins, perhaps a later start time and earlier ending time would make that day healthier. However, if most participants have arrived the afternoon before and have had the opportunity for a restful night's sleep, tournament events can begin earlier in the day.

Allowing for adequate sleep should be foremost in the minds of tournament directors when they create their tournament schedule. Twelve-hour days may be occasionally necessary, but the repeated twelve-hour day becomes a grind. Clearly, no tournament events should begin before 8:00 a.m. and a 9:00 a.m. start would be reasonable and appreciated by most tournament participants, knowing that it takes some participants several hours to get ready for competition in the morning. Ending each day at a reasonable hour, no later than 8:00 p.m., allows

for participants to have a reasonable evening meal, mostly likely not having to resort to a fast food alternative, and still have ample time for eight or more hours of sleep. Most forensic educators themselves work full days during the week with teaching, research, and administrative duties; there should be no reason to lengthen that schedule during a tournament. Mid-day breaks are also useful for encouraging wellness. Lunch breaks should approach 90 minutes. A typical 45 minutes to an hour break doesn't really let all team members congregate from late rounds, travel to a healthy meal and return to the tournament so as not to feel rushed for continued competition. Mid-day breaks can also allow time for a brief nap for those participants who find that habit to be healthy.

Keeping a tournament on time is essential for wellness. Reasonably allowing adequate time for travel to and from rounds is essential and given today's practices with double entrants, case disclosure and judge debate critiques, it's not reasonable to schedule an individual events round for less than 90 minutes and a debate round for less than 2½ hours. Dates for tournaments also need to be flexible. Not every tournament needs to occur on a Friday, Saturday, Sunday schedule. For forensic educators who work all week, there should be a conscious attempt to allow at least a single day off each week, even during a tournament. That may mean that a "day off" includes some tournament or travel, but accommodations should be made to consider this need. Some tournaments may occasionally begin on Thursday to end by Sunday. While some degree of regularity is appreciated, some tournaments may want to alter their days in certain years. Likewise, tournament directors should be conscious that many religious observances occur on Sundays. Tournament directors should consider scheduling accommodations for those who wish to participate in these observances since research has clearly shown significant benefits to a healthy spiritual life. Putting some creative thought into crafting a tournament schedule can truly make a tournament a pleasant and healthy experience for both participants and host.

Tournament Activities and Practices

Both tournament related and non-tournament related events can help to create a tournament that embodies wellness. For the tournament, insuring that there are adequate hired judges so that each full time judge has at least one round off per day helps to alleviate feelings of being overwhelmed. If judges know they'll have at least some time to collect their thoughts, visit with their team, relax with some food, they will be better able to effectively adjudicate during the remainder of the tournament.

For contestants, limiting the number of events one can enter and/or crafting individual sweepstakes awards which do not require students to exhaust themselves by participating in 5 or 6 events, perhaps events they feel highly uncomfortable doing, can create a reasonable tournament experience.

Crafting a tournament that embodies wellness includes creating wellness opportunities as well as limiting opportunities that jeopardize wellness. For example, when selecting tournament hotels, directors should actively seek hotels

that have exercise facilities with extended hours so tournament participants can benefit. If that is not possible, most campuses have some recreation facilities that a simple phone call might enable all tournament participants to be able to use when guests of the host school. Planned activities can also include opportunities for exercise. Some tournaments have included a volleyball game the night before competition. Bowling is a near universal, inexpensive, and often humorous activity. Depending on the climate, various outdoor activities could be incorporated into the schedule to combine socializing with the tournament environment. These planned recreational activities are particularly important between halves of swing tournaments, to give some mental separation between the stress of a competitive environment. If specific athletic events are not possible, perhaps having a host student sponsor a walk around campus could be included into a tournament schedule. This outdoor walk could be a fine alternative to the "smoking breaks" as an opportunity for "fresh" air.

Socializing is a significant reason why many are attracted to and remain in the activity. Parties for students and coaches have become popular traditions at many tournaments. However, there should probably be opportunities for these two groups to socialize separately since students are always likely to feel "on stage" whenever in the presence of potential judges. Obviously these parties should serve healthy food, and while renown as opportunities for alcohol, non-alcoholic alternatives should be available, even encouraged for all participants. Socializing often compromises sleep as well, so parties should begin and end at times that allow all participants to have a full night's sleep.

Tournament Food and Beverage

This is perhaps the easiest area of a tournament to make significant contributions to wellness. At tournaments, a wellness lounge should be available for participants throughout competition. This lounge, ideally, should not just be another classroom with harsh lighting and desks. It should strive to be a comfortable environment in which to relax, perhaps visit with friends, and serve as a departure from the stress of the regular tournament. Healthy snacks (e.g. energy bars, power ades, etc.) should be readily available to provide extra energy between scheduled meals. Perhaps soft music and other strategies that encourage participants to relax can provide a much-needed respite from the rigors of competition.

Tournament directors should be cognizant of all meal opportunities during the tournament. Initially, catering a meal or two can encourage healthy eating habits and save time during a tournament. Breakfasts should include fruit, juice, bagels, even granola, milk and cereal as well as the traditional coffee and jelly donuts. Affordable lunches can also be furnished by having a sandwich buffet with fruit and vegetables, a variety of meats and cheeses and various breads and non-carbonated beverages. These can be healthy and cost effective alternatives to just conveniently ordering pizza. If contacted, many college food services can provide meals; even box lunches at reasonable prices that allow pre-selected

healthy food choices. For evening meals, fast food restaurants are always well advertised and easy to find. Directors should work to feature a variety of healthy sit down style restaurants that may be unique to the tournament locale. Many times such restaurants will make special offers or provide discount coupons for tournament participants. Keeping tournament participants away from establishments that rely on extensive frying of foods should help participants feel energized, not sluggish throughout the tournament.

Tournament hosts should also insure that there are adequate opportunities for water throughout the tournament, especially given certain climate changes participants may experience given different geographic locations. Making certain that drinking fountains are operable and even providing bottled water helps keep participants from becoming dehydrated during hikes across campus for rounds.

Conclusion

Nearly all of the ideas in this essay have been tried at some tournaments across the country, and some wellness practices have become integrated into various tournaments. Each idea can be taken to extremes, but overall, tournament directors should work to conceptualize their tournament from a wellness perspective, understanding the unique pressures their campus, schedule, and/or date may provide to participants and then take steps to integrate as many opportunities for healthy decisions as possible. Wellness cannot and should not be the sole focus of a competitive tournament. By its very nature, forensics is competitive. However, with an understanding of what elements typically jeopardize health during a tournament, hosts can work to provide a variety of experiences which contribute to a healthy lifestyle so participants don't leave each tournament feeling drained of energy and their own wellness routine compromised.