



The National Wellness Institute stands in solidarity with all who seek justice for the tragic deaths of George Floyd, *countless other African Americans, and people of color*; and for the *institutionalized racism* and acts of injustice that have led up to this rightful outrage that we are witnessing throughout the country. The National Wellness Institute does not just stand in solidarity. We stand ready to help lead the change to *reduce intolerance, discrimination, marginalization, and injustices*. We recognize that these things impact the physical, mental, and emotional wellness of each individual, entire communities, and the nation as a whole.

As a leader in wellness, the oldest organization with wellness as a stated mission, and the organization that is leading the charge in multicultural competency in wellness, we must speak. Silence is not aligned with our unequivocal commitment to the professional development of diverse wellness practitioners and to promoting and providing the tools for communities and those that live within them, to enjoy high-level physical, mental and emotional wellness.

The current systemic barriers do not allow for the health and well-being of ALL. As a nation, we have failed to facilitate the development of intellectual curiosity of others. We have fallen short of combating biases and prejudices that perpetuate the wrongs and the injustices displayed by the killing of George Floyd. *We must not only be concerned about the biases and prejudices, but we also should focus on the mental health and wellness of those armed with the responsibility to serve and protect*. We have fallen short.

We are not doing a good job of acknowledging and addressing the fact that many of those that die while in police custody have mental health issues. We have not provided law enforcement with the competencies and support to engage in ways that will greatly reduce the chances of physical injury and death. We are not discussing the stress-related physical and mental health issues that arise from (1) **fear** of being killed or having a son, daughter, brother or sister killed, and (2) from **anger** about the high number of deaths while in police custody of Black and Brown people and the low numbers of prosecution of those responsible. As a country, we have not provided enough resources and tools for everyone to function optimally – which is the root definition of wellness. *National Wellness Institute is putting out this call to action for all wellness professionals to lead the change and to help the nation heal*.

For many decades, the societal actions have only fed lip service to the Preamble to the Constitution of the United States, which states that we "...promote the general Welfare and Secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity." Posterity is defined as ALL FUTURE GENERATIONS OF PEOPLE. It is time to demand changes that remove the systemic barriers, so that we all can thrive and create more opportunities for high-level wellness for everyone.

The National Wellness Institute does not have all the answers to the issues at hand. We can only offer where our expertise lies:

1. A greater focus on Multicultural Competency to increase everyone's intellectual wellness and enable us to support the wellness of all people

2. Understanding how to Champion Wellness using all Six Dimensions of Wellness (Intellectual, Occupational, Emotional, Spiritual, Social, and Physical)
3. Building a global web of support that brings together great thinking and doing from multiple geographies, spiritualities, cultures, and societies. Until we stop trying to build a one-size-fits-all plan, we will fail. Once we begin to connect and collaborate, we will have better opportunities to ensure the right tools and resources are available to remove the barriers.
4. Implement mental health and wellness initiatives for communities AND law enforcement

We stand together as a single voice for all who seek high-level wellness for all.

Sincerely, the Board of Directors and Staff of National Wellness Institute



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