

# INSTITUTE FOR PREVENTIVE HEALTHCARE & ADVOCACY



Kathey Avery, RN, BSN

**Avery Health - Education and Consulting** brings extensive experience and knowledge to help individuals and groups achieve positive health outcomes and implement equity.

**Kathey Avery**, founder and owner of Avery Health - Education and Consulting, has more than 35 years of experience in healthcare and community activism. She is dedicated to raising awareness about, and helping in the prevention of, chronic diseases and preventable cancers through patient and public education and personal accountability.

Contact Kathey Avery today at 828-768-2369 to schedule a talk or workshop. For more details, please visit [www.AveryHEC.com](http://www.AveryHEC.com)



The mission of the **Institute for Preventive Healthcare & Advocacy** is to promote optimum health for all residents of Buncombe County and surrounding areas by addressing the social determinants of health and the inequities in access to affordable and preventive healthcare.

[www.ifpha.org](http://www.ifpha.org)

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## Holistic Health Part 1

BY KATHEY AVERY RN, BSN, CN

*Our holistic health is affected by local, national, and world events.*

With so much chaos and conflict both globally, nationally, and locally, our bodies, minds, souls, and our very lifestyles will be affected whether we appear to be thinking about it or just living through it.

The CDC (Centers for Disease Control) defines “Place” as a broad and evolving concept. Places associated with our lives define, shape, and influence the health determinants we face throughout our lifetimes.

For the first time in my life, I find myself checking my passport and researching countries upholding democratic principles. An increasing uncertainty has heightened my concern about mental well-being, fearing that even efforts for equity and equality may become unlawful in the face of encroaching dictatorship.

### What Does Mental Wellness Mean?

The term “mental wellness” is aptly described by the Global Wellness Institute as an internal resource that enables us to think, feel, connect, and function—an active process fostering resilience, growth, and our ability to flourish.

According to the Global Wellness Institute, wellness is not a passive or static state but rather an “active pursuit” that is associated with intentions, choices, and actions as we work toward an optimal state of health and wellbeing. Wellness is linked to holistic health—that is, it extends beyond physical health and

incorporates many different dimensions that should work in harmony.

### What Would Dr. King Think?

In 1788 the USA became a loosely worded “democracy,” described by the Merriam-Webster dictionary as a system of government by the whole population. It is a government in which the supreme power is vested in the people and exercised by them directly or indirectly through a system of representation usually involving periodically held free elections.

I am becoming fearful of the society I might be forced to live in, and the “real” freedom that may be gone even though I have been fighting all my life for equity and equality. At least under a democracy I have been able to have some kind of voice while we have been working toward “a more perfect union.”

There are many things happening that make me worry about my future. This month we celebrate Martin Luther King Jr.’s birthday, while February is Black History Month. I wonder what Dr. King would do and what he would think of the direction we may be going toward a dictatorship.

A dictatorship, as defined, involves one person making all the rules and decisions without input from others. The prospect of absolute power is



*The best way to honor Martin Luther King Jr. is to continue to advocate for those facing inequities, oppression, and disparities.*

absolute power is the true threat.

Governments worldwide have adopted elements from various models, creating collective systems for their people. In the United States, Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security are systems we have fought for as a country so American citizens can have dignity and a safety net. In this country, sometimes even if we work hard, we are set up so that the American dream can be just out of reach because of the way capitalism works to keep the work force poor.

Since slavery, African Americans have had to fight for the right to vote. Reconstruction lasted a mere 12 years. Our nation’s struggle to keep the Union intact gave ex-slave-owners and southerners who stood against any progress the power to destroy reconstruction efforts. They rallied against former slaves’ freedom and found ways to erode any gains that were made. Does any of this feel familiar?

Reconstruction would have required southerners to give up not only prejudice but also their sense of entitlement to cheap black labor. It would have required that they admit a political principle they’d rejected.

Source: [www.loc.gov/exhibits/african-american-odyssey/reconstruction.html](http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/african-american-odyssey/reconstruction.html).

### How Will You Hold on to Your Well-Being?

At the end of 2024 what will you have done to be able to hold on to your well-being? The Declaration of Independence states that the truth is self-evident; that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness. I feel it is my obligation to “speak now or forever hold my peace!”



*Our wellness is significantly influenced by the physical, social, and cultural environments in which we live.*

unnerving, and it triggers concerns about losing the hard-fought freedoms and rights we’ve strived for throughout history.

Working closely with younger adults advocating for an egalitarian style of leadership, I emphasize the importance of staying engaged. Egalitarianism, rooted in the belief in equality, spans economic and legal dimensions, and many societies incorporate aspects of it.

Even within egalitarianism, a balance is essential to avoid chaos. While the term “socialism” may trigger apprehension,

**Happy Martin Luther King Jr. Day!**