

# NORTH AMERICA: CANADA

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## **1. What is currently making news in your country when it comes to wellness or wellbeing?**

The concept of wellness has permeated every facet of Canadian society as educated baby boomers seek greater health, wellness and longevity. Consumers have started making conscious choices that have a direct influence on all their buying decisions. Wellness is no longer a buzzword, it's becoming a way of life as Canadians are choosing GMO free food, fair trade products, ethical travel options, as well as environmentally friendly homes and vehicles and everything in between.

## **2. Please provide one sentence that describes what you think are important developments in your country for each of the following:**

**Spas:** The New Spa Wellness Culture Movement is bringing the industry back to source. There is a consumer led invitation for the industry to simplify, focus on sustainability and engaging social environments that provide greater emotional health and wellness.

**Wellness Tourism:** The current trend in wellness tourism reveals that affluent baby boomers are choosing high-end vacations in natural settings that offer a health or wellness advantage over the mundane beach vacation.

**Wellness Living Communities:** Wellness living communities are no longer a fringe movement and have gained legitimacy as well as great interest and enthusiasm among the mainstream population.

**Real Estate:** Sustainability is quickly becoming a priority in the Real Estate Industry. Once again, educated consumers are seeing the value of an eco-friendly and healthy home and they are pushing the industry to adapt to their new, more conscious needs.

**Nutrition:** Consumers are increasingly concerned with how their food is being produced and are choosing locally organically grown products.

**Fitness:** There is a current dichotomy in the fitness industry: On one end of the spectrum we are seeing the emergence of high-end training facilities with sophisticated equipment and polished urban design and at the other end of the spectrum, we have also noticed that there is a growing segment of the population that is turning to nature and low tech fitness practices such as Earthing for their daily fitness regimen.

### **3. How would you describe the state of workplace wellness in your country?**

Workplace wellness is a very vast subject and it would be important to segment each workplace category in order to present a precise analysis of the situation. We would create 3 main segments: Private sector, public sector and a special category for small and medium sized businesses. It would be important to mention that workplace wellness is somewhat of a taboo in Canadian society. While our country boasts the best quality of life in the world, there is also great suffering, which is often suppressed and hidden.

Certain industries in the private sector are more conscious of the importance of a positive workplace environment and will offer meditation and stress management classes as well as healthy food options and yoga rooms. However small and medium sized businesses aren't able to provide the same level of benefits to their employees as they are often struggling to make ends meet.

The public sector is currently in crisis as they feel the crush of austerity measures that do not take into consideration the health and well being of its workers. The impact on society is vast and far-reaching. The disparity between these segments is creating a greater rift between the rich and the poor and the middle class is quickly disappearing.

There is also a breakdown of traditional work hours as technology has created greater connectivity which means that the 9-5 work structure has expanded to a 20h cycle in some cases. Work/Life balance is greatly challenged as we are now constantly available via our portable technology.

We see the fantastic opportunities presented to our industry to show leadership in each segment of workplace wellness.

### **4. What has been the general attitude about investing in spa/wellness in your country in 2015? Specific examples?**

Speculators are seeing the tremendous potential for the spa/wellness industry and we are seeing a surge in massive investments in the development of new projects all over the country. For example : Maalouf international has invested 240 million

dollars in the La Rolland project, which is a four-season, indoor wellness destination/complex with hotels, spas, water parks, fitness installations and restaurants located in a small mountain community, just one hour out of Montreal. (This is the third project of its kind that we have seen from Maalouf International.

## **5. Whose responsibility is it to create a well world?**

We are all responsible for co-creating a well world.

Parents must love and be present for their children.

Schools need to teach children to be who they are, to connect with the earth, to be aware of the alignment of their body mind and spirit and to receive an education regarding the sacred connection between men and women.

Our health professionals must be open to new and ancient techniques that bring wellness and bridges need to be created between our doctors, nurses, doulas and other wise practitioners.

Our farms must honor the earth and produce healthy, organic food that nourishes our bodies.

Our businesses must embrace ethical and sustainable business practices that respect our natural resources and create abundance for all of us.

Women must learn to honour their power and gather in circles to support and take care of each other as they extend their service to the community.

Men must learn to collaborate more and compete less and use their great strength to build and not destroy.

We must all learn to care for each other and to realize that we are all equals regardless of our age, creed or colour.

Artists must realize that they are the creators and they must honour and nurture their creativity and allow it to shine in order to inspire others to do the same.

I believe there should be a Global Ministry of Wellness and we should work together to reimagine the structures of our societies with a focus on health, wellness, peace and social justice.

Every person who has the impulse to share their values and profound convictions about our collective wellness must speak up. Wellness must be within reach of every hand and should not be based solely in capitalistic terms. We have a social responsibility, as an industry, to make sure we create not only an individual wellness experience, but a great collective one, as well. Let us open our doors wide and nurture our humanity in order to co-create a better world.

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