



# THE AMERICAS: UNITED STATES

## What are the most significant global issues facing us today?

Keeping our planet and its people healthy. Stressors on our planet include overpopulation; lack of sustainability; the shrinking of our fresh water supplies; our continued reliance on fossil fuels and their toxic by-products; and the impact all of the above have on the delicate balance that is our home. As a spa person it helps me see the stressors on humans in the mind, body and spirit paradigm. So our foremost concern must be to keep our persons safe and healthy. Stressors to being healthy in body include wars, famine, a lack of understanding or compliance in living a healthy lifestyle in the west, and having access to the food, opportunity and time needed for a healthy lifestyle in the non-developed world, access to healthcare, and fewer stable economies with fewer opportunities for social mobility. Stressors in the way of enjoying a healthy mind include an overabundance of information that often lacks deeper thought or introspection, and a lack of affordable access to education to develop new skills for the evolving marketplace and emerging economies. Finally, stressors preventing us from experiencing an exalted spirit include a culture where through social media we make more connection with more people and communicate with them on a more superficial level than ever, leaving us little time for deeper friendships. We are so time-starved through our work and the inundation of information that we have less time to explore and connect with our community. And we have little time for introspection or “just being.”

## What do you see as the main innovations happening around the world, those which are game changing and/or disruptive?

I see at least four things with potential game changing effects. First, with the proliferation of handheld communication devices and access to the web, most of the world enjoys instant communication beyond their country's borders. This shines a great light on tyrants and on others who since time began have taken advantage of people through secrecy. However, this causes significant privacy concerns for ordinary citizens. And the potential for abuse by those who control our communications devices and networks increases exponentially. A second and perhaps related “innovation” is the tendency not only in social media but in our news media to break down complex issues into sound-bites that rarely reflect the complexity of the issues or challenge the population to think beyond the superficial. This has great implications for democracies founded on the principle of an educated and well-informed electorate. Thirdly, in the developed world, most economies are shifting away from reliance on producing goods with the majority of the GDP coming from services and “ideas.” This is a significant shift which requires employees to be flexible, well-educated and engaged, and employers who understand how to utilize the talents of their workforce by inspiring those employees toward their maximum effort. Finally, despite rapid gains in treating and preventing disease, access to healthcare is becoming increasingly difficult and more expensive, and this raises the real possibility that perhaps only the rich can be healthy.

## What do you see as the main innovations in the spa/wellness industry (existing and future)?

Here I am hopeful for two trends that have begun and which I hope will enjoy increased momentum. The first is bringing the spa experience to the middle class through the availability of affordable and often chain day spas that are right in your community. The second is even more hopeful: using spa (bodywork, mindfulness and exercise) as part of preventative and postoperative health. I am hopeful that, through the evolution of these two phenomena, spas on all levels will become the new social gathering places, ones that truly speak to the need to keep the body healthy and strong, to stimulate the mind and uplift the spirit.

## What do you see as the greatest opportunities/challenges for the global spa and wellness industry?

How to position spa and the power and potential preventative healthcare within the broader healthcare dialogue.

## What are some practical ways for businesses to create a climate for creativity and innovation?

It is absolutely critical that businesses fully engage their employees to bring their fullest potential to bear on the goals and vision of their business. Employees must fully understand the company's purpose and positioning and embrace that vision. They have to be lead in a workplace with all the systems of work are aligned with the company's vision. They have to have the opportunity within those systems to make real contributions to those processes and be inspired by their teammates and mangers to expand their talents and contributions. Finally, all of this needs to take place in an environment of trust where everyone stays focused on the goals and vision.

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