

NORTH AMERICA: UNITED STATES

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

Functional medicine is the cornerstone of helping people get to root cause and guide them back to wellness. More people are reading about environmental changes, benefits of diet changes & organic food, and the power of community. There is also increased awareness of the benefits of meditation, yoga, walking and moving during the day. Standing desks for most companies is the norm and people are more aware of the damage of sitting and how to try to stay well in a sedentary, high stress world.

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

Spas: Spas need to encompass teaching people how to eat and center themselves-empower them after treatment.

Wellness Tourism: Wellness Tourism is prevalent and if we ramp up the quality of spa wellness programs it will flourish.

Wellness Living Communities/Real Estate: Wellness living communities should be heavily focused on since all the literature points to the power of community being the main factor in a long, healthy life.

Beauty: Prevention, anti-inflammatory diet, organic skincare/makeup, water and food quality will help people achieve beauty.

Fitness: Fitness is a spectrum and people are understanding that they don't need to run a marathon to be fit, walking and moving daily has enormous health and wellness benefits.

Nutrition: The science and practice of Nutrition (nutritional counseling) is poor on the whole and good, evidence-based nutritional information needs to be taught to primary care MD's to begin to make a dent in chronic illness that is growing in the US.

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

There is a spectrum where we have some companies flourishing with true corporate wellness programs and others that may provide one workplace adjustment. Many companies are doing wellness or health fairs and are promoting people staying well by providing quality water, exercise class, ergonomic changes to work space, implementation of standing desks, massage therapy, meditation class or space, and doing workplace challenges to get people up and moving (staircase challenge, fit-bit races, etc).

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

Spa industry boomed and too many came out all at once so many have closed. Not many want to take the risk in investing. There are not enough that offer comprehensive programming, not enough that differentiate themselves, and too many doing the same thing- pay per massage, sauna, steam, etc. We used to have 3 spas in a 3 block radius (in NYC) that did everything from massage to yoga group classes to pedicures and 2 closed.

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

To change everything it takes everybody! The medical community needs to link with the spa community to truly get the message out and create change. We are up against the largest growth in chronic illness and the mainstream medical system is not equipped to help these individuals. We are at the forefront because true wellness is only achieved with better nutrition, mind-body practice (Yoga, meditation, breath work), movement practice, and workplace/leisure time balance. We know that in order to feel well you need to be aligned with a mission and passion and be connected with this in your life and community. We can help foster that community and reawaken others' passions!

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