

Wellness and a Sustainable Healthy Lifestyle

A conversation with JOANNA ROCHE, the director of The Westmoor Club's Wellness Center on Nantucket Island in Massachusetts.

Tell us about your background and how you gravitated toward Health and Wellness?

I joined Canyon Ranch in 1993 and so began my love affair with healthy living. I was 24 years old and had no idea that my life was about to be changed forever. Working in the spa industry in those early days was like sailing on the Mayflower to the new world. Working with Mel and Enid Zuckerman was a true privilege and they taught me that spa was just a sexy word for a place people came to learn how to be healthy. I stayed for 8 years and soaked up all the wisdom I could and left knowing that my philosophy of health, wellness, and spirituality had been grown and nurtured in a time and at a place that could never be recreated or experienced again. Life, however, is also practical at times, and I became not only skilled in programming and operations, but also in marketing and public relations for luxury brands. No career is complete without a stint in NYC, including mine, where I was the EVP of a PR agency specializing in lifestyle and beauty. As a matter of course, consulting took me to other parts of the country and the world, most frequently London where I worked for a startup called Tribesports. The common thread though all my work has always been "spa" – giving people the tools to live healthy lives. The why is easy – inspiring people to wellness is my passion.

My philosophy is to inspire people to be better versions of themselves

You've been with The Westmoor Club for more than three years and have worked to transform a high-end fitness center into a world-class wellness center. Talk about your philosophy and this progression.

My philosophy is simple – inspire people to be better versions of themselves. We're a multidimensional group, us humans; we

need more than a gym. Healthy living is about creating balance in all the areas of ourselves and living to our potential. A fitness center can offer a single dimension, but a wellness center can offer all the tools one might need on that journey. Joining The Westmoor Club gave me the opportunity to curate wellness experiences for our members that are personal, powerful, and speak to sustainable lifestyle change.

You've introduced a lot of new programming in the Wellness Center at The Westmoor Club.

Wellness is a holistic endeavor with seven components – social, emotional, intellectual, physical, environmental, occupational and spiritual. We try to offer education, tools, and experiences in each of these areas so that our members are challenged to look within and to consider balance as a wellness goal. Of course, there are specifics like personal training, Pilates, meditation, acupuncture – all the services we offer are aimed at helping members be engaged in their quality of life and aware of creating healthy habits which in turn manifest in balance.

What are you providing your membership?

Inspiration, education, and opportunity to be healthy – no matter what your age or limitations. If we translate that to "club speak", we want member engagement. When members are participating in all the activities, services, events, and amenities at a particular club, synergy is created, community is built and the membership buzzes with energy.

Where is the club industry headed in terms in wellness and fitness?

Spa, fitness and wellness are the fastest growing business segments in the club industry. Wellness is no longer considered a trend; most people see and understand the benefits of regular exercise, good nutrition, and self-care. Members who may have been introduced to wellness or spa vacations at destination resorts or through adventure travel over the years have realized that they can use their clubs as a way to continue practicing healthy habits and to truly create sustainable lifestyle change. ■





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