

PULSE

JULY 2007

WWW.EXPERIENCEISPA.COM

THE *Spa* TRINITY

PHYSICAL,
MENTAL
AND
SPIRITUAL
FITNESS



The Once-a-day Stress Relief Formula

“FOR ME AND ONLY ME”

Recently, I had the pleasure of experiencing the spa at Mandarin Oriental, New York. Its focus is on “holistic rejuvenation and relaxation in a setting of complete tranquility,” and they do just that. During my visit, I experienced

BY LENNY LaCOUR | a personalized program called “Time Rituals,” a journey that takes you through the sensory of both your conscious and subconscious mind; literally, time tailored for you and only you. During my 110-minute experience, they showed me how much could really be accomplished if I merely set aside time to allow my body to rest. As I was resurfacing from my journey, I told spa director Denise Vitiello that I felt like I just had a good night’s sleep. She reminded me, “It’s because you have to take time, more than a moment, to focus on yourself to truly rest your mind and body.”

Being in the health, beauty and spa worlds my entire career, I realize how important rest is to overall well-being. But I also live in the fast-paced world of today with the rest of you. It is no wonder lack of sleep is now at epidemic levels.

Our industry is the perfect place to take the lead on relaxation and sleep education. Clients come to us to escape, heal, relax and be pampered. In addition to making the most of their experience while they are with us, we need to help educate them about what they can do on their own to enhance their ability to get a good night’s sleep and find time to rest during the day.

At Red Mountain Spa in Utah, they have launched quarterly sleep retreats, and every Tuesday night they have a sleep program called “A Good Night’s Sleep.” In speaking with Karen Cheever, program manager, she explained that Red Mountain has a goal of helping their visitors leave with a sleep ritual for themselves. They help guests learn more about techniques they can use at home such as soft music, turning off the television and creating a ritual that involves everything from food to washing your face. While at the spa, guests can enjoy a natural environment in a pristine setting that is out of the big city lights. But they need to understand how they can create some of this at

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 24)



(CONTINUED ON PAGE 26)

home – it needs to become a daily part of their lifestyle.

Remember when we used to all sit down to dinner together? When we had daily routines based around relaxing and ending our day? We don't end our day any more; we just keep going until we drop into bed, if we even make it to the bed. We've lost our approach to sleep. Business and finance are just a couple of issues that have become so important that we are putting our health at stake. By not allowing ourselves to wind down and prepare for a good night's sleep, our subconscious mind keeps us awake.

Robert de Stefano of Sleep Garden Inc. combines his passion as well as clinical studies to create a driving force that is influencing spa sleep programs – including the launch of the one at Red Mountain. He feels sleep is not really that mysterious. "The secret lies in both science and Zen," he said. "Sleep is surrender. It's letting go of our wired-to-perform nature. Without realization, many of us resist this letting go. We attempt to will sleep to come and that will never work." He continued by explaining that we confuse being exhausted with being relaxed. Rest is really about controlling your brain, and de Stefano believes that music and visual relaxation are powerful tools that can help in this process. It's really "the human condition that gets in the way of a good night's sleep," de Stefano said. At Sleep Garden, they have harnessed the power of music and video for sleep with "zMusic and zMovie, The Sound Way to Sleep."

Everyone is trying to squeeze the last minute out of every day. Almost daily you will find an article about what lack of sleep

is doing to our society. Currently, the statistics are pointing to women who are trying to do it all and are sacrificing sleep so they can accomplish everything else they have on their plates. Studies are showing that the majority of American women are sleep deprived for a wide variety of reasons, and the negative impact on their lives, and the lives of those around them, is extensive.

Science proves that if you don't process your day-to-day experiences, they stay in your sub-subconscious and keep you awake. Relaxation and exercise, yoga, music and the overall environment can help. It's getting back to the basics of the mind, body and spirit – the foundation of our industry.

Dr. Patrick Porter of NewReality explained that it's important to take a few minutes during the day to just unplug your phone and become consciously aware of your thoughts. If you slow down mentally, you become more aware of your unconscious thinking. Basically, we clog up our minds to the point where we can't focus on positive thoughts. Porter's theory is that our mind works in blocks of information. The conscious mind can only store several chunks at a time, and the rest of the thoughts remain in the subconscious wait-

ing to be resolved. It's important to clear your mind to allow the wind to blow the thoughts through.

The NewReality program is based on creative visualization and relaxation (CVR). These sessions can be introduced at your facility and packaged with a take-home program. Sessions result in stress release, clearer thinking, better concentration, improved memory and enhanced creativity – a spiritual journey within yourself indeed.

I believe it's our job to help people take back control of their minds and bodies. We need to show them natural ways to heal and rest. Then we need to assist with ways they can replicate at home the relaxation they experience in a spa.

Ask your clients about their sleep and relaxation patterns and help them better understand their personal needs when it comes to relaxation. This is sure to be different for each individual. Help them understand how what they do to the body affects the mind and its ability to relax and disengage. Educate your clients with ideas that will help them relax during the day and sleep at night. And take some of this advice home yourself so you have a good night's sleep! ■

Let's keep talking,

Lenny



RESOURCE FINDER

Look to your ISPA Membership Directory (online or printed version) for more resource partners who offer supplements.



LENNY LACOUR specializes in building dynamic solutions for a wide variety of clients in the spa and salon industry. Lenny is an active ISPA member. In the past few years, he has concentrated his talents in marketing and membership for the association.

For more information, visit www.lacourspadevelopment.com.

Send your questions to: lenny@lacourspadevelopment.com.