

A shirtless man with a focused expression is shown in profile, lifting a black dumbbell. The background is a bright blue sky and a clear blue ocean. The man's skin is glistening, suggesting he is in a gym or a well-lit outdoor space. The dumbbell has 'JLD' printed on it in yellow.

HIP & IN  
TOOL TO SUCCESS!

# S.P.A.: The Power Tool To Success!

By Lawrence Biscontini



In this technologically advanced age, it's easy to be addicted to work. Staying connected to our work has become our international sport: we now e-mail on the subway, chat on the mobile phone anywhere and everywhere, and even connect to the internet on the plane. While such technological advances at first make us seem more productive, the accompanying stress can actually decrease our business over time.

Research shows that among the many resulting lifestyle changes that an overstressed and over-busy lifestyle can produce are increased stress hormones in the blood, lack of energy, a decreased immune system from an improper nutritional focus, and a body prone to injury from lack of both stability and mobility (Kravitz). Jung called people who are connected to their body, mind, and spirit "individuated humans". Today, some Western sources use the term "metrospiritual". A growing number of these individuals have learned to see the spa as the ultimate detox from life's stress in order to increase their professional productivity. Spas can not only do much to improve the overall quality of one's life, but also can boost business as well.

Recently, Time magazine's Time Traveler section named spas as the single most important resource for business travel because of how much spas have evolved from those first definitions of spa: "salus per aquum", or "health by water". The evolved spa of today stands for a sanctuary that serves as a trilogy: school, palace, and abode. In each of these departments, visitors can improve the overall quality of their professional and personal lives by techniques like stress reduction. While years ago someone may have associated

the word "massage" with the word "spa", the spas of today offer a great deal more towards lifestyle enhancement in their roles serving as a school, palace, and abode, and to these areas we now turn.

The spa as SCHOOL offers classes: world-class fusion programming in its fitness classes in which guests maximize benefits of caloric expenditure and muscular strengthening in minimal amounts of time. In other mind-body classes, guests learn to relax and to breathe. Research done on benefits of mind-body classes such as Yoga shows an enhancement of the body's healing mechanism called the parasympathetic nervous system. This helps the body to combat stress, decrease blood pressure, and ultimately increase one's productivity. But the term "classes" refers to more than movement. The leading spas today offer experiences in which guests learn about their minds and spirit in addition to their bodies. For example, nutritional classes find guests shopping for local produce, calculating its caloric breakdown, learning healthy ways to cook, and then enjoying the food. Other classes include lifestyle coaching, memory enhancement, and stress-management. Classes empower guests to become the strongest and most productive they can be in mind, body, and spirit. Research has shown that the more stress reduction technique an individual knows, the more productive he or she can be at the work-place.

The spa as PALACE offers world-class excellence in service. Guests are greeted and treated as royalty from the beginning to the end of their experience. Guests not only learn to relax while they are being regally pampered, but also learn different customer service techniques to take back to their own jobs, and ultimately this will help




to increase productivity there as well. A few examples come to mind: the significant role of aromatherapy, healing use of candles, the role of appropriate music, lighting, and feng shui decorative techniques.

The ABODE part of the spa is drawn from the resultant emotional feeling one has when at home. All elements of a complete spa experience combined give an altered sense of home-like safety and security within the walls of a spiritual and physical sanctuary. When one is home, one feels safe enough to lower ego to try different approaches to life, to eating, to movement. Furthermore, because people also feel protected within the walls of the spa, they relax more so than perhaps at any other destination including their homes because at the spa they do not anticipate incoming e-mails, telephone, fax, disruptions from children, among other things.

Finally, the spa draws on the fact that one's abode is where one tends to eat "comfort food". Similarly, spas today offer comprehensive and thoughtful meal, snack, and beverage selections to complement any lifestyle. Because of the intense consideration of the energy-inducing balance among carbohydrates, proteins, and fats, today's spa guest can learn how to maximize eating for

maximal output to be more productive in the work environment. Food always comes regally prepared as well, which invokes the "palatial" concept mentioned above.

Today's spa transcends just massages and facials to offering successful metrosexuals tangible techniques to increase productivity. Different types of movement and enrichment classes, innovative and indigenous spa treatments, and restorative cuisine selections all figure among the offerings. While an hour-long massage is still available, the s.p.a. total experience transcends that, offering smoking cessation and eating behaviour techniques, stress management, power eating, increasing strength, flexibility, and cardiovascular endurance. Successful savvy spa sybarites know that today's s.p.a. as a wellness centre offers specific tools from the school, palace, and abode aspects contained within its walls to increase overall success. 

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