



INTRODUCTION

A *Wellness Immersion* is an experience designed to create space to reconnect to one's sense of mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual wholeness. The experience involves a separation from routine life with the intention to invite a positive transformation. A Wellness Immersion can inspire a commitment to conscious growth. It can also provide us with the tools and motivation needed to fully integrate this transformational experience into our lives and sustain its benefits into our everyday being.

OBJECTIVES

- Propose an industry-standard definition for a Wellness Immersion
- Highlight the three categories of Wellness Immersions
- Clarify the best-practices and essential program elements that yield sustainable, positive outcomes
- Gather evidence of the effectiveness of Wellness Immersions to support enhanced funding by health insurers, policy makers and employers

SUPPORTING DEFINITIONS

Medically Supervised Therapeutic Immersion

- Purpose: To treat targeted health issues under the guidance of medical staff, become more resilient, give up unhealthy habits, sustainably implement healthy habits, focus on specific results.
- Defining features:
 - Facilitators: Medical staff on in-house team
 - Evaluation: Pre-visit evaluation and/or thorough evaluations at beginning and end of stay inform personalized recommendations for treatments, services, nutrition, etc.
 - Programming: Wide range of complementing programs & services provided (e.g., outdoor activities, yoga, meditation, educational lectures)
 - Nutrition: Nutrition plans and/or a specific, healthy diet an important part of the program
 - Duration: typically 7 - 10+ days

Integrated Health and Wellness Immersion

- Purpose: To improve wellbeing on all levels (physical, emotional, mental, spiritual), de-stress, reconnect with life purpose, become whole again.
- Defining features:
 - Facilitators: Full-time team includes medically trained staff (e.g., nurses, physical therapists, or wellness counselors); additional experts sometimes available during certain times of the year (i.e., visiting practitioner programs)
 - Evaluation: Thorough wellness/integrative health evaluation provided at beginning of stay to inform recommendations for programs and services
 - Programming: Wide range of programs & services address a variety of conditions and wellness dimensions (e.g., stress relief, sleep, rejuvenation, detox, fitness, deep relaxation, mindfulness, mental & emotional wellness, spiritual wellness, personal growth)
 - Nutrition: comprehensive and individualized nutritional plans often part of the program
 - Duration: typically 5 - 10+ days



Dedicated Retreat Immersion

- Purpose: To restore, relax, revitalize, engage in a specific wellness practice, and/or learn something new
- Defining features:
 - Facilitators: If hosted at 1) health & wellness resorts/destination spas or 2) holistic learning centers, administered by guest teachers or in-house experts; otherwise, hosted by individual health & wellness professionals who take groups to venues of their choice
 - Evaluation: Evaluations at beginning and end of stay not always included (sometimes available as an optional add-on)
 - Programing: Focuses on a specific health/wellness topic
 - Nutrition: Healthy cuisine but not necessarily individualized nutrition plans or special diets (e.g., detox, heart healthy, meat free, etc.)
 - Duration: typically 3 - 7+ days

KEY ELEMENTS OF A WELLNESS IMMERSION

- 1) *Intention*: Where do the host and participants find alignment in shared goals?
 - Space and time to reconnect
 - An active and intentional exploration of the multi-dimensional aspects of wellness.
 - Participant's desired outcomes
- 2) *Setting*: Does it provide a safe space for enabling the change process?
 - Access to nature
 - Beautiful and thoughtful architectural and landscape design
 - Energetic, esoteric, historical, and culturally-informed purposeful design
 - Sustainable design and regenerative practices
- 3) *Program*: What does a wellness immersion look like, from intake to departure?
 - Wellness immersion as a continuum
 - Evidence- based research
 - Personal guidance
 - Brand and audience alignment
 - Venue guidelines and policies
 - Post immersion follow up
- 4) *Community*: How does community support the wellness immersion?
 - Participants/groups of participants and hosts in community
 - Participants build community among each other
 - Participants and local community
 - Interpersonal connection
 - Sustainable practices that support the environment, and local community
 - Environmental stewardship
- 5) *Outcomes*: What are the benefits of a wellness immersion?
 - Cultivating presence and awareness
 - Improvement in knowledge of physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health practices
 - Expansion of one's sense of self
 - Improvement in health objectively measured through biomarkers
 - Sustainable behavior change

AN INVITATION

We invite you to join us in conversation as we work to adopt a consistent standard for the Wellness Immersion experience. We hope you will share your thoughts. We will compile feedback on the working version of our full [Reflection Document](#) from industry stakeholders and use it to further refine our definition of this term, with the shared goal of offering a reliable and consistent experience to our service providers, participants, marketers, and the media. In this way, we hope to foster a shared and accurate understanding of this valuable service and the experience it provides.