Wellness, Relaxation, Creativity: Development of a Business Plan Igniting the Creative Journey Towards Self-Actualization

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Wellness, Relaxation, Creativity: Development of a Business Plan
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A Project
in Creative Studies
by
Julie A. Wolasz

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements
for the Degree of
Master of Science

May 2015
Abstract

This project explores the affective side of creativity and its involvement in personal growth towards self-actualization. The author proposes that the implementation of relaxation techniques and creative training methods in a specialized spa-like retreat setting could assist an individual in their goals towards reaching self-actualization and ultimately producing a more creative person. The finished product includes a business plan identifying a business that is dedicated to guiding individuals towards self-actualization through a creative journey utilizing relaxation techniques, mindfulness and creativity training.

Key words: creativity in wellness, creative thinking, entrepreneur, altered states of consciousness, meditation and mindfulness, self-actualization

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May 20, 2015
Date
SUNY - Buffalo State
International Center for Studies in Creativity

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Dates of Approval:
20 May 2015
May 20, 2015

Project Advisor: J. Michael Fox
Candidate: Julie A. Wolasz
Acknowledgments

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to J Michael Fox, Lecturer at the International Center for Studies in Creativity (ICSC) and my advisor throughout this exciting adventure. I am extremely thankful for your valuable guidance and encouragement as well as all the stories and laughter.

I am also extremely grateful to Dr. Gerard Puccio, Chair of the Department and Professor at the ICSC, for believing in me and affording me this amazing opportunity to finally complete the necessary coursework I need to complete my degree. Without your support and attention to my academic success I would not have made it this far.

I would also like to express my genuine gratitude to Dr. Cyndi Burnett, an Assistant Professor at the ICSC and dear friend of mine, who has willingly shared her precious time with me reviewing my ideas for this project and encouraging me to conquer my own direction.

Also, I would like take this opportunity to thank other members of the ICSC Department including both faculty members and my fellow classmates for their help and support. To the late Dr. Mary Murdock who taught me to take time for myself and to live my life purposefully. Thank you for the encouragement and the memories. I also thank my parents for encouraging me to be all that I can be and giving me their amazing work ethic.

My deepest gratitude goes to my boyfriend, Mark Pereira, who undoubtedly encouraged me to complete my degree at any cost and to pursue my dreams no matter how challenging they may be. Thank you for assisting me wherever needed and supporting me throughout this venture.

Finally, I also place on record, my sense of gratitude to one and all, who directly or indirectly, have lent their hand in this venture.
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SECTION ONE: Project Background

Purpose and Background

Through my own experiences and knowledge in creativity I have a vision of developing a business that will encourage people to realize their own creative potential through individualized treatments and services in a relaxing and safe environment that will assist in leading them towards their greater purpose. The ultimate purpose of this project is to gain knowledge and expertise through research and training in the creation of a business plan for a wellness center that I envision. Involved in this process is an exploration of a select variety of relaxation techniques (such as Meditation and Yoga) and their benefits along-side creative training. Based on that exploration I will determine the benefits of relaxation techniques like those discussed in this paper and their ability to promote or enhance creativity. I will discuss the effects that wellness has on creativity and how creativity influences wellness. In addition to exploring specific modes of relaxation, movement techniques and creativity training as factors in enhancing creativity, this project will also touch on the benefits creativity has on business and business development. My hope is that I will demonstrate through research and development of this project that there is a plausible connection between wellness, relaxation and creativity. Although I find the literature extremely limited when it comes to linking wellness to creativity, the benefits of wellness are clearly linked to being a more creative person. Through development of my ideals based on research in various areas of wellness, relaxation techniques/movement, mindfulness and their link to enhancing creativity, I hope this project encourages more advanced research in this area.
Finally, throughout the development of this project to its completion, I hope my passion for fostering creativity in others and applying creativity to my business idea is apparent. I hope to modify the current operation of a wellness center and incorporate more mindfulness and meditation services along with creativity training. Through comparative research I refer to the National Wellness Institute’s Six Dimensions of Wellness and the Yukon Holistic Model of Wellness which are models that describe the criteria that one must fulfill in order to reach wellness at the center (see Appendix C & D). Both models are round (pie or hexagon) and include wellness at the center and six dimensions: Physical, Spiritual, Occupational, Social, Intellectual and Emotional. Dimensions recognize the different needs or criteria associated in order to achieve wellness. For example: Occupational is the stage that recognizes personal satisfaction in one’s life through work; Physical recognizes the need to be active and exercise regularly; Intellectual recognizes and individuals growth and discovery through knowledge; Social recognizes one’s contribution to society and environment; Spiritual recognizes the individuals deep appreciation and their search for greater purpose; Emotional recognizes positive energy and feelings awareness (Hettler, 1976). With reference to Hettler’s (1976) NWI model and the Yukon Holistic Model of Wellness, I will show that applying a means of creativity to each dimension of the NWI’s Six Dimensions of Wellness and the Yukon Holistic Model of Wellness will result in development of a tool and/or model I can use with my clients in order to explore the challenges related to achieving their wellness goals.
Rationale for Selection

Take pride in your dreams

I have always had a passion to do great things with my life. When I was 10 years old I wanted to grow up to be a professional baseball player. I wanted to play on the boys’ team because I dreamt I was good enough. Although that dream never came to fruition, I never stopped dreaming. Our dreams keep us on that road towards our greater purpose.

This project has encouraged me to learn the valuable steps needed in order to develop a business plan so I can use this tool to minimize risks while following my dream of owning my own business.

“Our truest life is when we are in our dreams awake.” – Henry David Thoreau

Traumatic life event

In 2007 I had a stroke, I was 30 years old. There is nothing like a traumatic event in your life to make you realize what is truly important. This was not the first event that occurred in my life that made me realize that I must keep searching for my greater purpose. Although I’ve never had a small figure, I’ve always been conscious of the quality of my health and wellness. It is critically important that I focus on wellness not only for the benefit of well-being but also to keep my stress levels minimal which intern keeps me very happy, positive and much more creative. This passion invokes my desire to learn more about the relationship between modes of wellness and enhancement of creativity.
Life happens

To some, being active, healthy and in tune with self can be too tedious. Not only is it just another thing to do, it’s expensive to care for oneself. It is an added expense and who has time for it? Who has extra time to care about themselves, let alone raising a family, having a career and whatever else is on our plate. Can we find a way to be more creative with our options to be healthy and happy? Can being healthy and relaxed make us more productive and creative? There is a way to make it all work. My dream and passion is to create a place where complete mind, body and soul matters. My inspiration is driven by the many experiences I’ve been fortunate enough to participate in at various spas I’ve visited. Through the development of this project and potential business, I would like to build on my experiences in order to develop a new type of experience for the wellness center I am envisioning.

Creativity training through International Center for Studies in Creativity

My decision to study creativity has significantly impacted my life in a positive way. The coursework has taught me valuable lessons and skills that I subconsciously apply my learned creativity skills in my daily routine. I remember the first course I took, CRS205 Intro to Creative Studies, and the comfort I felt participating in that class. I instantly wanted to learn more and kept taking creativity courses. This was the first time in my life I was doing something for me that felt right. Prior to taking the Creative Studies courses I intended to go to law school but instead pursued a degree in Creative Studies. Throughout my course work I dug deeper into my own existence and learned so much more about myself. Knowledge and training in creative
problem solving has made me a better thinker, improved my organization skills and helped me better define my identity and develop my own personal philosophy.

**Passion for life and moving towards my greater purpose**

I have my own motivation for encouraging people to work towards their own greater purpose. My challenge and hope is to foster this business idea which my clients (individuals and businesses) willingly endure various spa services and/or creative workshops in order to assist in their development towards Self-Actualization and Affective Creativity (Wolasz, 2015). I have a strong appreciation for the fact that creativity influences our growth potential. I have used different stages of the Creative Problem Solving (CPS) process to define and successfully solve problems in my own life. It is important to me and I firmly believe that creative activities, the desire for good health and wellness and inner peace are all positive factors in reaching self-actualization or achieving greater purpose. Performing specific activities in a creative manner is bringing me closer to defining a higher purpose in my life (Wolasz, 2015).

**SECTION TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

**Introduction**

"Change is not something that we should fear. Rather, it is something that we should welcome. For without change, nothing in this world would ever grow or blossom, and no one in this world would ever move forward to become the person they’re meant to be."

*Author Unknown*
Business development is creative in many ways as problem solving and creativity are valuable components of developing a business plan. The business plan is necessary if you want to implement a successful well thought out business. A business plan minimizes the risks and helps narrow the multiple layers involved in developing the business. In this section I will discuss Entrepreneurship and the elements of businesses success along with the benefits of preparing the business plan. In the business section I will also elaborate on the connection to creativity.

Considering that developing a business plan is a labor intensive process that requires in-depth research, I reached out to the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at SUNY Buffalo State for the guidance I needed to be successful. While development of the business plan required creativity, I also researched the relationship between wellness and creativity and linked them to the services I would like to provide at my business and the results my clients will achieve after participation. Specifically, some of the services offered at the wellness center focus on nurturing all aspects as described by the six dimensions of wellness and the holistic model for wellness: including physical, mental, social, intellectual, spiritual and occupational (see Appendix C & D). This project has also naturally touched on the affective skills of creativity and through research identified various techniques to be offered as services at my business. Some of these services include general spa services such as a variety of massages, facials and pedicures. Other services offered that I feel will enhance creativity and creative thinking include meditation, mindfulness, yoga and a variety of workshops offering creative skills training among others. In the following sections, I’ve discussed my beliefs and have evaluated some research that supports my ideals. In some of the references, I identify specific techniques that enhance creativity and
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will assist clients like mine in their journey towards better self-awareness and their greater purpose.

Also in this section I discuss the importance of creativity in the workplace and how businesses and corporations induce and benefit from a more creative and productive workforce. Due to the rising healthcare costs, businesses are looking for supplemental wellness programs to keep their employees healthy and productive.

Finally, I close this literature review section with the benefits of applying wellness to everyday living through a journey towards self-actualization or finding our greater purpose. Through my development of the business plan and research and development of my ideals in this literature review I find it easy to modify each section of the six dimensions of wellness and the holistic wellness model by adding creative challenges and creating a new model and/or tool I called the Spoke Analysis (see Appendix C - F).

Business

Entrepreneurship

When it comes to Entrepreneurship, there are elements for success that are critical for starting a business. Entrepreneurship is “recognition of an opportunity (not necessarily one that he or she initiated) and marshaling of forces to exploit that opportunity with minimal financial risk for personal gain”(Sexton & Bownan-Upton, 1991 p. 11). One of the ways to minimize the risk is to do a business plan which I will discuss in more detail below. Becoming an entrepreneur requires commitment, assets, and capital. Deciding to develop an idea for business into reality also requires an ample amount of focus, time, energy, and creativity in order for the new
business to be successful. There are specific elements involved in the success of any business which is why it is so important to develop a business plan as a tool for success in present and future states of the business. “Product (or service) itself does not determine its probable success for failure. It depends as much on productivity marketing, distribution, financing and administration as on the product itself” (Whiting & Solomon, 1989).

Businesses are categorized into an industry according to their concepts and competition. In terms of competition, there will always be competitive forces in every industry. Essentially these driving forces shape the industry. Specific forces in any industry could be rivalry among competitors; threats of new firms entering the market as competition; substitute products/services to meet needs of the consumer; bargaining power of suppliers and bargaining power of customers (Whiting & Solomon, 1989).

In this project I have identified the connection between business and creativity and the importance of creativity in the various aspects of developing and operating a business. Creativity in business is necessary in order for a business to survive and stay ahead of the competition. Cook (1998) focused on the components of creativity that are necessary in order to keep a business strong, competitive and flourishing. “Direct benefits of creativity in an organization are in performance improvements which can be achieved through cost reduction or by wealth creation” (Cook, 1998). It is important to remove any creative blocks as quickly as possible. Also, it is important to change the environment as well as hire creative leaders. “Much of creativity in an organization can be minor as well as major and after it manifests itself as incremental continuous shifts in the way products and services are desired, produced and delivered” (Cook, 1998).
As I developed the relationship between business and creativity I felt it important to note that there are certain qualities that an entrepreneur should possess in order to maintain a creative environment within a business. It is important to the growth of the business that an entrepreneur display creative values and is nourishing of a creative culture. Some ways in which the entrepreneur can establish a creative environment is through a more flexible approach to staff needs as well as celebrate mistakes and allow the efficient staff to take risks. This will allow for new thinking and possibly leading the company in new direction or develop a new product that will benefit the company. I feel that if the entrepreneur gives staff the flexibility to contribute to new product and service ideas along with testing them or working through a creative process to improve them the business will benefit in the long run.

The Business Plan

Drafting a business plan is no joke. It requires a lot time and energy. Did I forget to mention - - Creativity? “The process of writing a business plan forces one to think through assumptions and evaluate the idea.” (Sexton & Bowman-Upton 1991). Business plan development is important for risk reduction. The entrepreneur has this opportunity to express his/her vision and bring the business to life to the level that others will understand. The business plan is an important document that shows the credibility and passion of the entrepreneur which he/she will produce to potential investors. Investors are taking a risk and need to see a business plan with a solid foundation, a valuable product/service and an experienced management team.

In this project I developed a business plan which describes my vision of creating a Wellness Center that clearly focuses on the individual or team that has a desire to reach a greater purpose or to enhance creativity, creative thinking and productivity. I designed the business plan
which is a living document and continues to grow with creative thinking. A full description of the components of the business plan is described in Appendix B.

**Wellness & Creativity**

**Wellness**

I define wellness as the self-driven evolving process of defining and achieving one’s own personal greater purpose. Wellness is a positive process of self-development that focuses on the whole body that is also influenced by holistic health practices. It is a fairly modern concept that continues to evolve through research and development. Merriam-Webster online dictionary defines wellness as, “the quality or state of being in good health especially as an actively sought goal.” In Hettler (1976), The National Wellness Institute (NWI) defines wellness similarly as a “conscious, self-directed and evolving process of achieving full potential. Further, it is a multidimensional and holistic, encompassing lifestyle, mental and spiritual well-being and the environment.” NWI expands on this idea and includes an “interdependent model referred to as the Six Dimensions of Wellness which provides categories from which NWI derives its resources and services.”

As part of developing this project I reviewed the few resources I located in order to justify that the relationship between wellness and creativity exists. Unfortunately there is not much research focusing on this relationship alone and it is critical to the development of my business plan to make this connection. However, although there is not much literature out there to support my assertions, I am hopeful that this connection can be achieved. The result of this connection is that people are motivated to take charge of themselves and move closer to a better state of well-being.
Throughout my research of wellness and creativity I found an interesting article describing the holistic health initiatives that closely align with wellness initiatives within my business plan. In Gross (1980), holistic health is described as “an approach to the well-being of people that includes the prevention of illness, alternative ways of treating illness, and the means by which good health and the full enjoyment of life can be achieved.” Holistic is also a form of positive wellness whereas the movement leads towards “achieving fullness in living and removing the obstacles to positive wellness” (Gross, 1980 p. 97). My connection here is derived from some of the processes involved in holistic health measures which include the likes of meditation, fitness, nourishment, vitality and spirituality. Each of these holistic processes promote techniques that ultimately lead an individual wellness and creativity. Below, I expanded on the benefits of mindfulness and meditation and its connection with enhancing an individual’s creativity.

In Hettler (1976), the NWI’s Six Dimensions of Wellness is the best approach I found through my research that expresses the meaning of Wellness and identifies with the ideals of my business. “Wellness is being applied to related fields, such as health promotion and holistic health and has grown with the helping professions such as counseling and the medical arts practices.” Wellness and various techniques associated are integral factors in achieving one’s greater purpose or self-actualization and enhancing creativity.

**Altered States of Consciousness**

The meaning of consciousness seems to be a controversial term that may refer to the subjective awareness and experience of both internal and external phenomena (Garcia-Romeu and Tart, 2013 p. 123). The purpose of this project is to understand the special type of experience
one may endure while participating in various wellness techniques of relaxation including mindfulness, meditation and yoga. I am referring to the state of consciousness and the way in which an experience can be organized as a result of participating in wellness techniques such as meditation and mindfulness. Merriam-Webster defines altered states of consciousness (ASC) as “any of various states of awareness that deviate from and are usually clearly demarcated from ordinary waking consciousness.” An example of this state would be “dreaming” and such that there is a feeling of awareness. This project focuses on the feeling and relaxation experiences one may feel as they are journey towards their greater purpose.

Garcia-Romeu and Tart (2013, p. 126) discuss that views of ASC have a history dating as far back Paleolithic and Neolithic humans. The Eastern views of ASC experience are also well dated and include inner nature experiences “independent of all the contents of ordinary awareness.” These methods or techniques were historically designed to induce altered consciousness.

Garcia-Romeu and Tart (2013 p. 123) discuss western views of ASC having only begun to be seriously studied from the psychological perspective since the beginning of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century.” Maslow’s contribution to the study of ASC began with a shift in focus of his work to study high-functioning individuals. “His work explored the values and motivations of highly developed or self-actualizing people”(p. 128). His studies focused on what elements are necessary for an individual to reach self-actualization and what experiences they encountered on their journey. Due to Maslow’s focus on studying the “subjective experience and superlative functioning, psychology began to reconsider the role of consciousness in human development, and the potential value of ASCs” (p. 128).
In this project I have reviewed wellness techniques and methods of relaxation that will enhance an individual's experience on their journey towards their greater purpose. I feel that wellness techniques such as meditation and yoga allow an individual to relax into a state of consciousness that goes beyond relaxation and promotes experiences that result in a positive affect and enhance creativity and creative thinking skills in an individual.

**Relaxation**

"Research has shown that being too tense and/or living with too much stress has a significant negative impact on our lives. It can lead to physical illness such as high blood pressure (Hettler, 1976).

There are certainly other forms of relaxation that differ from what I am discussing in this project. References made to relaxation in this paper are not the typical kind you think of like sleeping or just lounging in front of the television to catch up on a favorite series. Sleeping is definitely an important need as it gives us much needed rest to prepare us for our daily routine. Most of what I am discussing here is outside the scope of my project, however, it is important to know how people define their own meaning of relaxation and how it relates to them.

There are other specialized activities that I perform on a regular basis that help me feel relaxed and "in-tune" with well-being. Some of these activities are as follows:

1. Play date with my nieces and nephew.
2. Taking a really long bike ride.
3. Soaking in a hot tub under the night sky on a cold night.
4. Napping on a hammock outside next to the trees, feeling the breeze on my face.
5. Volunteering my time for a good cause.
Some of these activities may not seem relaxing to the average person, however, these activities actually help me relax because they take my mind away from the grind of my daily routine. Each the above-mentioned activities have some element of fun involved. Essentially I am changing my focus to me and doing what feels good at that moment in time. I truly enjoy doing what essentially brings me to a better place in my life seems whole, connected and open to trying new things.

There are other forms of relaxation that do not necessarily pertain to sleeping or lounging around that may influence other areas of our lives such as work and problem solving. As individuals we need to renew our energy through sleep and even through exercise. How can we be creative and even productive if there are endless piles of work, strict deadlines and no downtime. This project focuses on development of a business that focuses on transitioning individuals through wellness techniques into more creative and productive individuals that realize their full potential in their journey to a greater purpose.

**Mindfulness & Meditation**

*Meditation increases your vitality and strengthens your intelligence...your mental clarity and health improve. You acquire the patience and fortitude to face any problem in life. So meditate! Only through meditation will you find the treasures you are seeking.*  - Mata Amritanandmayi

**Mindfulness.** Mindfulness is not an area I am highly familiar, although through research, I realize that there is a relationship as to the effects it has on creativity. I had to dig deep to build the relationship and found some interesting articles in doing so. In Lea, Cadman and Philo (2015), “Mindfulness meditation is an integrative form of meditation that aims to cultivate awareness of the participant’s current experience (notably their thoughts and feelings), as well as
an attitude of non-judgment towards this experience.” My interpretation is that Mindfulness is different kind of awareness that is free of static and allows you to wander to places in your mind you can’t reach on a regular basis. I feel that Mindfulness relates to how you feel during daydreaming and at this point you have entered into a creative state of mind. Rothschild (2014) best stated that “Mindfulness meditation is a great technique to learn to help improve creativity.” In her article she describes how Mindfulness plays a role in how she handles being “stuck” on a problem that needs creativity. “Take some time out to be quiet and allow your stress to subside by focusing on your breath for a few minutes. Starting a regular meditation practice will help you learn new skills and actually train your mind and get your mind and get your emotions to calm down to allow your creative genius to flow!” I believe this to be so true based on a couple of experiences I participated during a conference I attended. I relate to her experiences and feel that Mindfulness is an amazing tool to influence creativity. Mindfulness is also well studied and has benefits as used with employees in businesses.

In Mushtaq (2014), Mindfulness is clearly identified as being “focused and fully present in the here and now – is good for individuals and good for business’s bottom line.” More businesses are offering alternate modes of stress relief for their employees including meditation. Not everyone can take a 20-minute nap during the middle of the day because some jobs are hands on and coverage is needed. People need down time throughout the day and a 30-minute lunch, if you can take one doesn’t count much as relaxation. Mindfulness is not just a corporate trend, but a proven method for success.

In Davis and Hayes (2011), they discuss how prolonged participation in Mindfulness meditation contributes to positive affect. “Research indicates that meditation may elicit positive emotions, minimize negative affect and rumination, and enable effective emotion regulation.
This article does not specifically refer to Mindfulness as contributing to enhanced creativity, however, one could make the relationship that positive affect is directly related to enhanced creativity. I developed the business plan to include Mindfulness as a relaxation service offered and I believe that this method will assist an individual in their quest to reach enhanced creativity and find their greater purpose.

*Meditation.* It is simply the practice of “being in the here and now” and such practice brings about inner peace, calmness and essentially is associated with the various elements of wellness (Sebelis, 2011 p.151). Meditation is an effective way to enhance general well-being (Colzato, 2012). Research and studies regarding evidence of the connection between meditation and creativity is demanding attention and little has been devoted to the study of this valuable relationship.

> “Meditation involves the formulation of a conscious intention that carries into the unconscious, via absorption, until a state of pure consciousness is attained. The ultimate goal of meditation, however, is the psycho-physiological integration of the pure conscious, the transcendent state, with empirical consciousness” (Horan, 2009 p. 200).

When one meditates they become connected with the inner-being and it is a serious form of relaxation. “When the mind is happy, the body is healthy, for body and mind are dependently serving each other” (Sebelis, 2011 p. 151). Meditation can help the body become more efficient and energetic and also helps maintain a balance in the fundamental body measurement areas such as blood pressure and weight. Meditation also “improves self-esteem, creativity and productivity” (Sebelis, 2011 p. 151).

In Sarath (2006), the author examined the integration of meditation practices into the college and university classrooms laying the groundwork for “creativity and consciousness studies.” Meditation is also described as being known for its “spiritual and philosophical
A Business Plan Through Creativity & Wellness

traditions around the world and as a basic tool for the cultivation of mental clarity, insight, creativity, inner calm, well-being, compassion, and a variety of other interpersonal qualities" (Sarath, 2006 p. 1817).

In a study by Ren, et al. (2011), they performed a study on 48 undergraduate students with no previous meditation practice to test whether or not a 20-minute meditation session increased the participants’ insight in their ability to solve problems. Results showed that participants with 20-minutes of meditation were able to solve more of the previously unsolved problems compared to those participants in the control group without meditation. The results of this study provide direct evidence that meditation plays a role in promoting insight or creativity. Specifically, those participants who participated in the meditation session showed to have had increased insight ability and were more alert in a mindful state of consciousness.

Although meditation is not part of my daily routine, I have participated in workshops that offered different types of meditation experiences. My experiences with meditation have been positive which is why I have dedicated myself to learning more about the practice and the connection to creativity. In 2001 I attended the Creative Problem Solving Institute (CPSI) conference and experienced a guided meditation with musical instruments. The experience was so amazing, at the end of the session, I remember feeling like I was floating on air. It was an experience and feeling I always reflect on and another reason why I have interest in this area.

On April 11, 2015 & April 15, 2015, I had personal communications with Kristen Lee who is an artist and participant in the Creative Studies Program and SUNY Buffalo State. Lee actively meditates and writes guided meditation plans for family and friends. She is an amazing artist and has a wonderful zest for life. I was pleased to have had the opportunity to share a few comments with her regarding her familiarity and experience with meditation. During our
conversation I asked her if she felt that meditation and creativity have a connection. Lee stated that in her experience she is very "familiar with meditation towards self-actualization." She also stated that "once you achieve a higher state of consciousness during a meditation there are times you feel a state of transcendence and you feel physically sort of light and weightless." Lee also confirmed that "there is definitely a connection between meditation and creativity. When you are at a greater state of balance and clarity is when creativity can flourish."

Through my review of available research regarding the benefits of meditation and my personal conversation with Kristin Lee, I feel confident in my ability to confirm that the practice of meditation leads to enhanced creativity and improved creative thinking. Meditation is a critical component of my business and will assist my clients in their journey towards wellness and achievement of their greater purpose.

Transcendental Meditation [TM]. Considering that anxiety and stress are known to cause mental blocks and psychological issues which also contribute to lack of creativity and creative thinking, therapeutic methods were developed to relieve these issues (Gowan, 1992). TM is a widely used technique that is described as pure consciousness or awareness without perception. It is a form of restful awareness in which your mind is awake. “The TM technique allows your mind to easily settle inward, through quieter levels of thought, until you experience the most silent and peaceful level of your own awareness — pure consciousness” (TM website). This technique is fairly modern and has been around since the 1960’s. It is a technique that has proven to increase creativity, reduce anxiety and control stress. Though TM is not the only technique known to affect creativity it is best known to westerners and there is a sizable amount of published research relative to its beneficial effects on creativity (Gowan, 1992). Another well documented beneficial result of TM is that it promotes psychological openness. How does this
happen? In Gowan (1992), he eloquently testifies as to his experiences as a TMer and clearly states that “TM does increase performance.” It is common for a TMer to have a “creative idea come to focus” after a meditation. A sincere motive of this project was to introduce techniques such as Mindfulness, Mediation and TM to individuals who typically might not consider these techniques in their daily routine in order to increase creativity and/or creative thought. The best explanation I found through the research relative to what happens when one encounters TM is expressed in Gowan (1992). “Meditation produces a quasi-hypnogogic state in which there is increased psychological openness to the preconscious elements in one’s psyche. The increased psychological openness is much like thinking the compartmental walls between the conscious mind and the preconscious areas, so that the normally impenetrable barrier becomes penetrable and like osmoses, a creative idea “leaks” into consciousness.”

**Yoga**

“Yoga is a form of mind-body fitness that combines muscular activity and an internally directed mindful focus on awareness of the self, the breath and energy” (Woodyard, 2011p. 49). Continued practice of yoga promotes strength, endurance and flexibility. Some of the individual characteristics that are achieved through yoga are friendliness, compassion, self-control and well-being among others. Regular participation in yoga results in life changing outcomes including self-awareness, improved energy and enjoyment of life (Woodyard, 2011).

As I reviewed specific literature relating to the beneficial effects of participating in yoga practice I realized that the prolonged results lead to fulfillment and enjoyment of life which I am ultimately hoping to help my clients reach through development of this business. Yoga promotes inner and self-awareness and positive affect which is my connection to creativity.
Creativity

When I think of creativity, I think of a favorite book. The first thing that comes to mind is, "Where did this story come from and why didn’t I think of it?" Although I wish I could write novels, I’d rather read them instead. However, if I took a creative writing class I probably could learn how to write a novel or maybe even come up with a story behind the idea. Regardless, we are all creative in some way. If it doesn’t seem apparent, everyone is creative and creativity and/or creative behavior can be learned or enhanced with a little practice and the right tools.

Creativity has many meanings that cannot simply be stated in one tight phrase. Creativity is most commonly defined as the “production of something new or original” (Sternberg, 1999 p 3; Torrence and Goff, 1992 p. 79); “the development of original ideas that are useful and influential” (Runco, 2004, p. 658; Sternberg, 1999 p. 3); a “process or product that could include an invention, improved product, scientific theory, new design or a literary work” (Torrence and Goff, 1992 p. 79). “Creativity drives innovation & evolution, providing original ideas and options, but it is also a reaction to challenges of life” (Runco, 2004 p. 679).

The study of creativity has had its ups and downs yet interest in its research has grown since the 1950s. As I develop this project I realize how critical it is for continued research and development of creativity, its concepts and applications. Although I know that creativity, creative thinking and productivity is enhanced through CPS training

“Creativity is a form of self-expression or a way of understanding or coping with life that is intimately connected with personal dignity, expression of one’s inner being, self-actualization and the like” (Maslow, 1973). Maslow’s interpretation of creativity specifically points towards self-awareness and the individual’s ability to live purposefully as they continue on their journey to find their greater purpose or self-actualization. “There are two aspects to the socially useful
dimension of creativity (a) creativity as an aspect of spiritual-aesthetic life that helps society become more enlightened, humane and “healthy”, and (b) creativity in the sense of human capital, that increases physical well-being and financial prosperity and makes the nation strong and safe” (Cropley, 2006 p. 125).

As I dig deeper into the meaning of creativity and define its relationship to some of the topics discussed in this project I realize that there is a positive connection, specifically in business and wellness. “Creativity in business is typically viewed as a talent, which resides only in a few, and many managers will not see it as necessarily part of their role. In the 21st Century workplace as well as building on existing knowledge, we need to develop new cultures which focus on developing creativity in everyone” (Burton and Dalley, 2009). Businesses should invest more in their employees by giving them flexibility and encouraging them to problem solve their own issues and allow them to offer ideas where need by using creativity thinking and problem solving skills. “Organizations moving from good to great, however, are learning to trust the ideas from creative imagination as well” (Burton and Dalley, 2009). Some businesses are developing quiet areas for employees to relax or recharge throughout the day. I believe that relaxation is a necessity throughout the day in order to clear the mind and be open for new ideas and thinking.

Wellness & Creativity in the Workplace

Creativity is needed. In an age where constant change is inevitable due to the frequent boosts in technology, businesses are forced to adapt to change quickly or they will fail. The importance of a business to invest in their employees’ well-being in order to foster their
creativity and productivity is critical. "Businesses that value creativity remain flexible enough to adapt to changing conditions in their environment. Valuing and embracing creativity will improve and organizations capacity to respond quickly to the demands of competition and the breakneck pace of technology. Creativity in the workplace is what fuels businesses in making shifts and changes that increase productivity and profitability" (Goff, 2001). For example, a major problem facing companies today is their lack of leadership in training their employees to be free thinkers. Giving employees the opportunity to learn the skills they need to complete their job successfully with an ample amount of flexibility to make key decisions and problem solve issues as they arise is beneficial to the company. Trust and flexibility between the employer and employee ultimately saves time and money and allows for new thinking which can be developed and evaluated into a workable solution "Companies organized as traditional, bureaucratic hierarchies simply cannot respond quickly enough to customer demands. The success of companies will depend on their ability to address consumer needs and demands more creatively and effectively" (Goff, 2001).

**Need for supplemental wellness services.** One of the focuses of this project is to show that there is a need for a company to invest in their employees by partnering with a Wellness Center (like mine) that not only offers relaxation services but offers individualized or group wellness coaching. Considering the rising costs of healthcare and high deductible plans it is wise for companies to invest in supplemental wellness services for their employees. For instance, I currently work at a law firm and my boss decided that he would promote a healthier work environment by having a small gym constructed in our office complete with workout equipment and showers. Many of the staff use the facility daily[before work, during lunch and after work]. It is impressive to see the amount of weight-loss in the office over the first year!
Need to Recharge. One of the ideas behind the wellness program is that it is versatile and beneficial to the individual and to both small and large companies. Part of the marketing plan for promoting the Wellness Center is making the program attractive to corporations and other business looking to take an active role in promoting/incorporating wellness programs into their employees’ routine. Modern work ethics are forcing employees to work non-traditional and long hours in order to meet the demands of the business. As we know, energy is a renewable source so employees need time to recharge. The art of renewal doesn’t mean to run to the nearest store to purchase a sugar loaded chocolate bar or pour a caffeine rich beverage like coffee or soda.

“Strategic renewal – including daytime workouts, short afternoon naps, longer sleep hours, more time away from the “office” and longer more frequent vacations boosts productivity, job performance and health” (Schwartz, 2013).

This project and business idea developed a plan for a business that will offer specialized relaxation and wellness style services to individuals and businesses seeking retreats or just a seminar or day services geared at introducing relaxation techniques into one’s routine in order to enhance innovation and creativity and essentially drive productivity.

Self-Actualization

As life goes on it becomes tiring to keep up the character you invented for yourself, and so you relapse into individuality and become more like yourself every day. This is sometimes disconcerting for those around you, but a great relief to the person concerned. – Agatha Christie

Maslow discusses the real self as a deeper self, such so that you need to dig deeper and deeper in order to peel through all the layers (Wolasz, 2015). He also discusses “Primary
Creativeness as what come out of unconscious which is the source of new discovery – of real novelty – of ideas which depart from what exists at this point. This kind of primary creativeness is very probably a heritage of every human being.” Maslow is saying that every healthy human being is capable of this primary creativeness and if you dig deep enough you will find it there (Maslow, 1992).

I have realized that through research and development of this project that we are all searching for our greater purpose and it seems so far out of reach. There are challenges we all face along the way that may be unexpected and others that we force upon ourselves to challenge ourselves to be better on the inside and out. It is important to live life purposefully and I feel we can only achieve our greater purpose by overcoming all of the challenges that prevent us from being a whole person.

SECTION THREE: PROCESS PLAN

Creativity plays an important role - -

Before I even thought about re-entering the program to finish my degree, I met with Dr. Burnett, a good friend of mine. At our meeting she asked me to do something for myself and what she told me next helped me to realize what was really important to me. She challenged me to make a list of my wishes covering three pages front and back. That exercise made me realize what was truly important to me in the next few years of my life. Two of the statements encouraged me to finish my degree and the other is building a solid foundation for my future.
A major part of the process was deciding where my focus was in all of this. I was to fact find exactly what I was looking to create – what type of “void” am I to fill by developing this wellness business. I performed a few facilitations and applied my learned creativity skills on my own ideas, trying to choose the best options to move forward and develop. The funny thing is, I’m such an ideator that I found it challenging to narrow down the best ideas. Soon realized that I spent way too much time diverging and not enough time converging. Then – “Aha” – I know where I want my focus needs to be which lead me to where I am today. I learned a lot more about myself in managing the Creative Problem Solving (CPS) process in order to ultimately get what I needed to be successful. I also learned that CPS was a key function in helping me to reach and explore all the options. Other people who worked through the process with me (some not trained in CPS) were very impressed with the results.

Once I decided where my focus needed to be I used stages of the CPS process to help develop my ideas into workable solutions. One of my challenges in developing a “spa-like” wellness center business was that it did not sound like a novel idea as there are so many wellness centers and spa businesses already functioning. The problem was that I needed to define my brand and identify what makes my business different from all the others and can it be viable. Business is all about risk and being better than the competition. In what ways might I improve my business model in order to be better than my potential competition? I dug further into this and came up with the problem statement – In what ways might I differentiate my business? After generating numerous ideas; highlighting hits; clustering and renaming, I reached the development stage. I decided to do use the POInt tool to help me determine the Pluses, Opportunities, Issues and new thinking. In my new thinking I came up with ways to MODIFY what already works in the wellness industry. My new thinking sound like this, “What I now see
myself doing is offering creativity based workshops and skills that can be incorporated into any program or individualized client plan.”

Further, in the marketing stage of the business plan it is important to come up with a marketing plan. This definitely seems like a difficult task considering the business is not yet in existence. What I decided to do is use a small focus group to generate some very neat marketing ideas for this spa. One group of ideas that I ultimately had some hits was discount and membership based programs. These didn’t seem too original but were necessary and an idea came out was taking donations or offering services to low income business and individual clients. This might generate additional business because people enjoy when community matter.

Finally, I definitely tapped in to affective creativity tools in order to develop some of my ideas. I used visioning in order to develop my core values and mission statement for the business plan. I wrote a journal entry on the development of my business five years from now. This ultimately helped me to close the divergence of the plan so I can keep moving to completion.

**Developing the Business Plan**

After narrowing down my area of focus I decided that it would be a great skill to learn how to develop a business plan. This is the ultimate purpose of this project. I didn’t realize how creative developing a business plan was until I was faced with the task. Once I had the business idea in place it was the next logical step in setting my idea to action. Obviously, I would need to seek out experts to give me the tools I need to be successful in its creation. I reached out to Andrew Delmonte of the Small Business Development Center [SBDC] in order to begin the process of writing a business plan and learn the importance of this document. I realized that it
makes sense to take advantage of services that are available free to the public. Andrew was a wealth of knowledge and at our first meeting he allowed me to explain everything I had in mind for the business and he helped me to create a timeline based on my idea. Because my business idea has many attributes, he initially quoted my time to build the plan at up to six months but said I could complete a good plan in half the time with appropriate resources and help. He also helped identify the pluses, opportunities and issues of a business idea like mine. I felt an instant connection to the creativity development tool – POInt, only that it was my job to follow-through to develop new thinking and follow-through. I realized that without the use of CPS prior to meeting with Delmonte at SBDC, I would have been in a mess. We were able to jump right in and discuss the outline for developing the business plan and set up a meeting for our next follow-up meeting to discuss progress. Through my discussions with Delmonte he did identify my idea as “a novel idea that has differences from an average wellness center and/or spa that currently exists in the area.” With this in mind I felt confident that my business could be something worthwhile to explore.

Working through this process or any process it is a good idea to be trained in the process or the tools needed or to get the training needed to be successful. Delmonte stressed the importance of creating a business plan before just jumping right into implementation. This is also another clear connection to creativity and how using CPS helps answer some of the questions throughout the drafting stages of the business plan. Essentially through development stages of the business plan you are evaluating what will work and communicating the vision of the idea which is absolutely connected to the affective creativity thinking skill. I found that visionary thinking is an effective tool in development of the business plan as you are “looking at how things might be instead of how they currently are” (Puccio, Mance, Switalski, Reali, 2012).
Throughout the development of this business plan I was visioning where I want my business to be in three to five years.

I am actually developing this plan to help minimize my financial risk and also to use the plan as a management tool for operating my business once it is up and running. Planning also helps to detect the flaws that are fatal to the success of a business and allow you to evaluate them to make the idea workable. This functionality in business plan creation is definitely a connection to creativity as I am overcoming the obstacles and/or challenging new thinking.

Once Delmonte set me free until the next scheduled meeting, I began to organize my idea and began performing the necessary research regarding everything that is important to me and development of a successful business centered on wellness and creativity. My research began with learning more about business, entrepreneurship, business plan development, wellness, relaxation, mindfulness, meditation and other movements including Yoga. All of this research and development forced me to be critical about the services I intend to offer and will they transform my clients and help lead them towards their greater purpose. After all – my intention is to develop a relaxing, creative environment where my clients can feel great about themselves in their quest towards their greater purpose.

My vision, my business model

In order to even begin the business plan I had to develop a clear vision of what I want this business to be. Initially the idea was very broad and needed some clarification. I began with the idea of creating a business that offers a variety of services to people (e.g., relaxation methods and creativity workshops) as a catalyst to realize their greater purpose. As I thought deeper about services I wanted to offer and the services my potential clients would be interested in I developed a model that signifies the vision of my wellness center.
**My wellness center vision model (Appendix G).** This model was developed in order to list the current state of the general population in column A, service “affects” offered in column B, and the desired state in column C. Ultimately, this model encompasses the vision of the business.

**My wellness center client approach model and/or tool (Appendix E & F).** Models are created for a variety of reason and some help to clarify a concept, idea or desired state. In reviewing the National Wellness Institute’s Six Dimensions of Wellness and the Yukon’s Holistic Model for Wellness I realized that these models were very inspiring and had great elements. Each is very descriptive and user friendly. I like both well enough to refer to them as point of interest or support for my ideals and business plan. However, in order for these types of models to be useful for me or my business, I must modify them and put them to action (See Appendix E & F).

The type of clients that will patron my business will be seeking results and wellness associated goals including those such as relaxation, self-actualization, creativity and productivity. Therefore, I developed a tool/model using the same dimensions as the NWI model and the Yukon model that will be useful for my wellness workshops. In order to determine strengths and areas in need of focus to reach their wellness goals, the client should put their wellness challenge or goal in the center circle. The model has six circles with spokes attached to the center “wellness” challenge. Each circle and spoke leading to the center represents each of the NWI’s Six Dimensions of Wellness and the Yukon Holistic Model; Physical, Intellectual, Spirituality, Occupational, Emotional and Social. Once the client has their wellness challenge defined (through initial meeting and clarification), they must generate their own challenges for the six dimensions using challenge statement starters such as: What Ways Might I (IWWMI)?
How Might I (HMI)? These challenges will focus on blocks to achieving the six dimensions that all work together in order for the client to reach their wellness goals. Once the client completes this section they must choose which challenges are preventing them from reaching their goals. Also, this process allows the client to own their own direction and allows my company to build the best program for the client in order to help them achieve their goals. For example: in the Physical Dimension, if a client says IWWMI achieve better flexibility?, I might include Yoga sessions in their development plan. In the Intellectual Dimension, if a client says IWWMI change my way of thinking? I might include a Creativity workshop in their development plan.

Although this tool and/or model has not yet been tested on an actual client, it is a modification of existing models (see Appendix C & D) that intends to identify challenges of the client within the dimensions and gives the client ownership and brings them closer to achieving their wellness goals.

SECTION FOUR: EVALUATION & FEEDBACK PLAN

**Introduction.** As I followed through to develop my idea into a business plan, it was not part of my concept for the purpose of this project to evaluate the benefits of my services as the business is not yet in existence. At this point I had rely on my knowledge of business and creativity and what I gained through my research in these areas as evaluation is out of the scope of what I am attempting to accomplish with this project. My focus was strictly related to learning how to develop a business plan followed by the development of a business plan for my business idea and the relationship to creativity. Through my own personal experiences and what I have learned and examined throughout the development of this project and through research, it
is apparent to me that participation in certain wellness activities will result in creativity. Involvement is not just the physical body but the emotional, social, occupational, spiritual and intellectual also known as the six dimensions of wellness (see Appendix C).

**Business Practice Feedback.** Feedback in all forms is an important part of the success of any business. When customer and employees give their opinions regarding satisfaction or dissatisfaction of services offered it becomes a motivational factor for the owners or the business board of directors to make changes to improve or enhance the situations or issues. Comment cards or a business’ request to be rated for level of satisfaction is a good way to get constructive criticisms that could be fixed immediately.

**Client Feedback on their level of creativity.** In my attempts to develop a business where I claim specific services endured by the client for an extended period of time will promote creativity and creative thinking, I must offer an evaluation for the client to test levels of creativity in their current state as well as in their final state of higher self-awareness. My plan is to use the Kirton Adaptation-Innovation Inventory (KA-I) which is a style test that is administered to individuals which illuminates their preferences for creativity and change. I hope to prove that by taking a potential client in their current state and moving them through a program state, including individualized program of spa services, relaxation techniques and creative training they will result in new “higher” state and ultimately be a more creative person capable of more advanced creative thinking and problem solving. By using the KA-I on my clients I will have a better idea of their current state which will allow me to personally and individually build the best program for my clients with the results they desire. Also, if clients are not getting the results they hope for I will be able to overcome the obstacles based on the test results and individual style.
SECTION FIVE: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

Further areas of potential study that are currently outside the scope of this project but potentially have a parallel connection to creativity based on their affective attributes are: altered states of consciousness, hypnosis and transcendental meditation. Although I slightly touched on these areas throughout the development of this project, it is important to further study these areas. Considering that the study of creativity is now beyond infancy more studies are needed in these areas in order to create a more solid foundation in the connection of these areas of relaxation and affective behaviors with creativity.

According to Treffinger, Isaksen and Firestien (1992), they claim that psychoanalysts have moved away from traditional views and have placed the "locus of creativity in the preconscious rather than the unconscious." They further share a powerful message as they make connections with consciousness of the mind and creativity:

"Psychedelic approaches to creativity emphasizes the importance of expanding the awareness or consciousness of the mind, helping the person to be more creative by opening vast new horizons of untapped resources and experiences. A fundamental assumption underlying these theories is that the most people seldom or never tap the most potent, creative dimensions of the mind; they learn from early childhood to restrict their experiences" (p. 93).

I feel that people lock down their creativity because of fear of living in their own skin. In my own observations, I see that when people block their creativity they have difficult time following through to their own greater purpose and get stuck in what I call their safety zone. Although this area has parallel attributes to my project it is outside the scope and deserves further thought and development.
Finally, though research in creativity has evolved more is needed in these areas of the unconscious. One reason I feel that the area in the field hasn’t been researched in depth as of yet is due to its strong emotional connections. Further research and studies in these areas would be a significant contribution to creativity considering the effects of mindfulness and meditation tapping into the unconscious. It makes sense that there is a connection here.

SECTION SIX: PROJECT SUMMARY

Key Learnings

My key learning’s in the project are quite impressive. Once I started digging into the literature and getting involved with the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) I realized that there is such a close relationship between business development and creativity. As I developed this project different experiences unfolded that really took me into new thinking and I was really excited about this. First I realized that the Creative Problem Solving process was very important throughout the development of the business plan. When I began this project I had a rough idea of where I wanted to take it. After some clarification I realized that I was in somewhat of a mess and my idea was very broad and not defined. After I used CPS skills in order to clarify my idea I realized that it might be important to research the various relationships I am trying to make with creativity.

This project has also taught me so much about myself. I learned that there are many areas of my life that need improvement and I am the only one that can make it happen for me. I realized that it is important to stay connected as I am extremely lucky to be surrounded by a number of amazingly brilliant people who offer me infinite amount of support.
Above all, the most important lesson I’ve learned while I developed this project is that it is actually okay to put ME first and that it is not selfish to do this.

**Conclusion**

This project reflects the skills I learned through my training with the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) in business plan development. I learned how to prepare a business plan for a business idea I explored. After meeting with the SBDC I realized that creating a business plan required much creativity. Along with development of the business plan I wanted to explore some important relationships and their link creativity. This project gave me the opportunity to develop a passion and link it to creativity. I reviewed pertinent literature that supports my thinking and my ideals for the business. As humans we have a natural instinct to succeed and we are ultimately on a journey to maximize our potential, seek meaning to our lives, self-actualization or whatever one wishes to call it. A thorough literature review shows that there are significant connections between business development, wellness, mindfulness meditation, and other relaxation techniques with creativity. Methods of affective creativity and its applications is an area of research in the field of creativity that should continue to grow.

Throughout the process, I spent countless hours running my ideas through CPS in order to get the best ideas for the business plan. As a result I have created a Business Plan for a Wellness Center that focuses on guiding individuals on their journey towards their greater purpose through initiating specific wellness techniques including general spa and fitness, mindfulness and meditation, creative workshops and training, among others. I effectively modified Hettler’s (1976) NWI Six Dimensions of Wellness and Yukon Holistic Model of Wellness in order to apply the benefits to my working business plan. I have named my
model/tool the Spoke Analysis (see Appendix E & F). Additionally, I have created a model for my business that combines my ideals into a vision.
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APPENDIX A
Bibliography of further reading


[http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/10793-010](http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/10793-010)


APPENDIX B
My business plan summation; A shell of a plan

Executive Summary

The Executive Summary (ES) is the first section in the business plan. This section is extremely important for presentation purposes to investors and potential lenders. It is a brief overview of the Business Plan (BP) that includes various elements to follow. Although it is the first section in the plan it is the last section that should be developed when drafting the business plan.

It is important that this document be written as if it is the only part of the plan that will be read. Important elements of this document that should be included to make it a well written document are: Business purpose; Business description (name, location product or service, market/competition & management expertise); Business goals and timeline for achievement; Market and Competition (current and forecast); Market Strategy (in brief); Key management w/ experience; Elements that will contribute to business success; Financial needs; and Earning projections & potential return to investors.

In my development of the BP, this section is currently a work in progress. A BP is a living document that is meant to be changed as it is developed. Just as when sorting a mess or solving a problem it is important to develop before implementing. Due to the large scope of the idea and the different stages involved, this section will continue to evolve.

Goals and Objectives

The Goals and Objectives (G&O) section of the BP encompasses the purpose of the business and should also include the mission, vision and core values of the business. Throughout the process of developing the BP, I found it difficult to solidify the mission and vision of the business because the BP continued to change and evolve. It was less challenging for me to begin this section by developing the goals. Although each piece of the BP is critical, goals give the business substance and criteria for achievement. Some examples of goals that I developed for my business are as follows:

Goals

Strive towards the greater purpose.
Enhance creativity through a series of relaxation techniques and workshops.
Develop innovative one-of-a-kind services.
Maximize client relaxation.
Empower the mind and body to promote whole body wellness.
Deliver excellent customer service and achieve high customer satisfaction ratings.
Build business revenue through innovative services and client satisfaction.
Objectives

The objectives section of the plan is “what I’m going to do” to achieve the goals. It is the section where we “break it down.” Goals are meant to be met and the objectives help the entrepreneur visualize achievement. It is important when developing the objectives that they are created with deadlines.

Core Values

Core Values (CV) represent the company’s belief system and the driving force for achieving their goals. They form the foundation of the business and involve the wishes of the entrepreneur but the priority of the employees and the company as a whole as well. CV can be terms or small statements. Below are sample CV that I determined fit the mission and vision of my business:

CREATIVITY

INSPIRATION

INTEGRITY [PROFESSIONAL]

PASSION

TRUST

EXCELLENCE

Services

The Services section of the BP is actually known as “Products and Services” section. It is a description of the products or services offered. This section should also include comparison of competitor’s products and a break-even analysis by product. Considering that the BP I have developed is a business based on services offered to a client in lieu of a product, I have labeled this section “Services.” This section is extremely important in helping the entrepreneur determine spacing needs, staffing needs & start-up equipment needs.

What you will notice about this section is that it lists a variety of services with minimal description at this point. Considering that this BP is an evolving document it is wise to include all potential services to be offered, some of which may be developed further or eliminated altogether. Therefore, I have included the services I would like to offer at my business as I intend to offer a range of services that the client will choose from in developing their individualized plan. People have different needs and comfort levels so it is important to consider this in development of the business service plan.
At this point I have developed services to be offered and am currently in the “comparison shopping” phase. I have pulled services and pricing for approximately 20 spas in the Western New York Area. I am currently pricing out my services and building a spreadsheet in order to compare services and pricing in the local area. This will help me offer competitive pricing and allow me to prepare the break even analysis. All of these steps will help my company stay competitive in pricing and offer innovative services to stay ahead of the competition.

Below is a list of the services I plan to offer:

**GENERAL WELLNESS SERVICES:**

Relaxation Rooms: Fire Wall; Water Falls; Sounds & Sights of Nature; Sauna; Steam Room; HOT SPAS

**RELAXATION SERVICES:**

YOGA

PILATES

MEDITATION *Mindfulness, Metta[love kindness], Mantra, Nada Yoga[sound meditation], Guided Meditation [visual meditation].

**FITNESS SERVICES:**

SPIN

CIRCUIT TRAINING

PERSONAL TRAINING

PHYSICAL THERAPIES

**SPA SERVICES:**

MASSAGES *Therapeutic; Warm Stone

BATH CEREMONIES *Herbal, Botanical or Romance

**BODY WRAPS:**

*REVIVING – body specific treatments using aromatic oils, lotions, products & other aids for reviving Peels, Polishes, Towel wraps & Lotions = 60 mins

*NURTURING – body specific treatments using exfoliation, aromatic target oils and products, massage of target areas while in hot body wrap finished with lotion = 45-120 mins
FACIALS *classic, anti-aging, hydration, men’s, eye hydration

MANICURES

PEDICURES

PEDI SOAK & MASSAGE

MANI-PEDI COMBO

BODY HAIR REMOVAL * Waxing, Sugaring, Threading

EYELASHES

CREATE YOUR OWN EXPERIENCE [therapist guided to suit client needs]:

*Choose service(s), products & ambiance*

Create an individual experience by developing 1 – 4 spa treatments and/or counseling/consulting services.

GROUP & CORPORATE WELLNESS ½ or full DAY RETREAT PACKAGES:

*Includes light snack, beverages & access to any available relaxation rooms, sauna & steam rooms.

DUET * 2 services of choice - 4 hr spa access*

TRINITY *3 services of choice – 6 hr spa access also includes light lunch*

QUATRO *4 services of choice - full day only also includes lunch*

CREATIVE CONSULTATION SERVICES & WORKSHOPS [individual & group rates]:

Incorporating creativity into my life

Finding ME, my quest towards self-actualization . . .

Using Creative Thinking to find ways to solve open ended problems…

Fostering the creative potential of my workforce

Instilling creativity in the workplace

MOBILE SPA RETREAT PACKAGES FOR GROUPS [15+]:

Mini Mani/Pedi
Chair Massages
Wellness Seminars / Workplace Wellness Seminars
Team Building Seminar
Creative Consultation

Unique Competitive Advantage

The Unique Competitive Advantage section of the BP is important for identifying the management skills and experience of the entrepreneur and his/her team. This could be a “solo” section at first to help determine start-up needs. In this section it is important to focus on “service” superiority and identifying what makes the business different or more appealing than others in the same type of market. Also in this section, the entrepreneur can point out any existing partnerships, investors or contacts currently in place. Other advantages should be brought out in this section including materials needed or not needed; cost savings; labor expense savings or any special effects planned.

For example, in this plan I used my Operations Management background as a key factor in planned success of this business. I focused on the strengths in my resume and summed up my exceptional planning and organization skills with emphasis on customer service, time management, high scope projects and employee relations. I used sample experiences and my ability to be flexible and problem solving skills as a unique competitive advantage.

Another example of a unique competitive advantage is my intention is to develop full service discount packages and limited number of free services and make them available to low income and/or companies that have a financial disadvantage. Services would be contracted with individuals and companies for a controlled period of time making life enhancing, relaxation and creative skills services and training available to these individuals, businesses and their staff. In exchange these individuals and companies would provide detailed feedback of benefits and/or disadvantages of my services to help with my business growth and further enhancement/development of additional services.

Market Analysis

The Market Analysis section of the BP required a good amount of research. In this section it is important to determine who will “buy” your products and/or services. It will also assist in finding the right location for the business if one hasn’t been chosen. A description of the target market is necessary along with its projected growth potential. It is extremely important to visit the
competition and make work charts with comparative pricing, what works for them and ambiance analysis.

In this section it is also important to research the industry trends as in “what’s new”, “popular”, and does this fit into my plan. In development of the BP it was helpful to use CPS and the POInt tool here to identify pluses, opportunities, issues and new thinking. That is the nice thing about using CPS, it’s not linear and tools can be used where needed in any stage.

Also, I felt that this section helped me determine where the good location would be for the business based on demographics, competition and new growth. This determination was based on research relating to competition, demographics and market trends.

**Marketing Strategy**

This section is developed relative to entering the proposed or current business into the market. It is important to include goals and timeline in this section. This section requires a strategy development plan. In this section also I used CPS to develop marketing ideas to help enter my business into the market as well as ideas to get more people interested in a business like mine.

**Management Plan**

In the BP this section identifies the management team and the business organization structure. In this project I identified my team of advisers consisting of the management team, partners, accounting, board of directors and stockholders. Although this may potentially change or include only the owner, it is important to have a plan. Below is the organization chart identifying the board of directors, position and potential business.
Below is the staffing plan identifying start-up positions and number of employees to meet initial needs of the business. In addition to the staffing plan it is important to develop job descriptions as well as a plan for future need as the company grows. At this point, I continue to work on development of job descriptions, tracking systems and worksheets.

**Form of Business:**

Corporation

**Board of Directors:**

Julie Wolasz, President & Secretary

Mark Pereira, Vice President & Treasurer

**Detail of Stock Ownership [considered]:**

Julie Wolasz – 51%
Mark Pereira – 34%

Corporate Partners / Investors [3] – 5% each

*No corporate partners should own more shares than Julie Wolasz or Mark Pereira.

**Staffing Plan w/ number of Employees:**

**Customer Service Representation:**

Human Resources Manager [1]

IT Personnel [1 part-time] – Handles internal operating systems; Website & Social Media

Receptionist [2]

Housekeeping [2] – 1 on-site part-time during business hours; 1 on-site full-time after hours

**Skilled Staff Representation:**

*Massage Therapists [2 – by contract w/ possible 2 more after 1 year]*

Facial Therapist Calibri (Body)

*Personal Trainer [1 – by contract w/1 more added by 1 year]*

Fitness Instructor [1]

Yoga Instructor [1 – to start w/ 1 more added by 1 year]

**Wellness Consultants & Creative Consultants:**

Wellness Coach[1]

Nutritionist [1]

Consultants [2]

**Financial Data**

In this section the entrepreneur will outline the start-up costs for the business. For this project it included the materials needed in order to offer the services. For example: Massage services require massage tables, towels and oils. In my plan I have identified a series of items required to start the business and this includes the space as well. Specifics such as analysis of capitalization
decisions which includes an analysis as to whether or not start-up material and equipment should be leased or purchased. Further in this section, it is the responsibility of the business owner to forecast out three to five year including first year financial projections in quarters and yearly thereafter. In terms of cost projections, an analysis of cost alternatives such as contracting or subcontracting services is an important aspect in projecting finances.

Other hard items that must be developed in this section which will record the finances of the company include profit and loss statements, balance sheets, cash flow statement and capital expenditure estimate.

Also in this section, the business owner would explain the use of the new funds and provide information relative to the potential return to investors relative to the current industry trends in general.

Considering the business plan is a living document that constantly changes I have not yet considered all areas of this section.

Information used to develop Appendix A was result of paperwork received and personal communications (February, 2015 – Present) with Andrew Delmonte from the Small Business Development Center at SUNY Buffalo State College.
APPENDIX C
Six Dimensions of Wellness Model

The Six Dimensions of Wellness
©1976
Bill Hettler, MD, Co-Founder,
National Wellness Institute

APPENDIX D
A holistic model of wellness

pathways to WELLNESS...

A holistic model of wellness, retrieved from http://www.yukonwellness.ca/holistic.php#VUUR6mdAQdk

The Spoke Analysis Model/Tool was developed in order to lead an individual on their creative journey by taking ownership of the dimensions of wellness in their own lives. The individual will begin with their wellness goal or challenge in the center. The individual will then brainstorm the elements that are personal to themselves within each dimension. They will then pose elements in need of focus as challenge statements for each of the 6 dimensions. See Appendix E with Sample elements/criteria.

This is a sample model that includes some criteria in order to explain how the tool is used. The center should identify the individual or client’s wellness goal. The specific dimensions in this model include sample criteria or elements that are decided by the client through their own interpretation or brainstorming. Once the client or individual gets to this level they should develop challenge statements. For example, the client should use statement starters such as In What Ways Might I (IWWMI) or How Might I (HMI) in order to determine new thinking in each dimension. Also, this section will assist in determining which wellness techniques are necessary for the success of the individual/client.
APPENDIX G
My Business Plan Model - Vision


This model was created as a visual to express the state of an individual or group that may seek services that my business intends to offer through guided analysis and plan development including wellness techniques in order to reach their creative state (the desired state).