

Wellness Trends: from 2020 to 2021, from the Global Wellness Summit

It is time to bid farewell to the trends of 2020 and welcome the 2021 trends.

Introducing the [Global Wellness Trends Report: The Future of Wellness 2021](#), Susie Ellis, Chair and CEO and Nancy Davis, Chief Creative Officer & Executive Director stated:

*The 2021 GWS Trends Report captures the nature of the paradigm shift caused by COVID-19 and the myriad ways in which wellness has taken hold.... Wellness has gone from being a **nice to have** to a **must-have for all**.*

Fig.1 Global Wellness Trends Report: The Future of Wellness 2021		
	Trend	Author
1	Hollywood and the Entertainment Industries Jump into Wellness	Beth McGroarty
	<i>Move over purists; big media means wellness for all</i>	
2	The Future of Immune Health: Stop Boosting, Start Balancing	Beth McGroarty
	<i>Say goodbye to pop-it, guzzle-it supplements and hello to evidence-backed immune health</i>	
3	Spiritual and Numinous Moments in Architecture	Veronica Schreiber Smith
	<i>The move from ostentatious fads to architecture that touches our souls</i>	
4	Just Breathe!	Sandra Ballentine
	<i>Breath goes from woo-woo wellness to a powerful health tool</i>	
5	The Self-Care Renaissance	Cecelia Girr & Skyler Hubler
	<i>Where wellness and healthcare converge</i>	
6	Adding Color to Wellness	Tonia Callender
	<i>Moving from optics to substance</i>	
7	Resetting Events with Wellness	Nancy Davis
	<i>You may never sit on a banquet chair again</i>	
8	Money Out Loud	Cecelia Girr & Skyler Hubler
	<i>Financial wellness is finding its voice</i>	
9	2021: The Year of the Travel Reset	Elaine Glusac
	<i>From manic getaways to slower, more mindful travel</i>	
	Source: 2021 Wellness Trends, from Global Wellness Summit , Conceptasia, January 2021	

Beth McGroarty, VP Research & Forecasting notes:

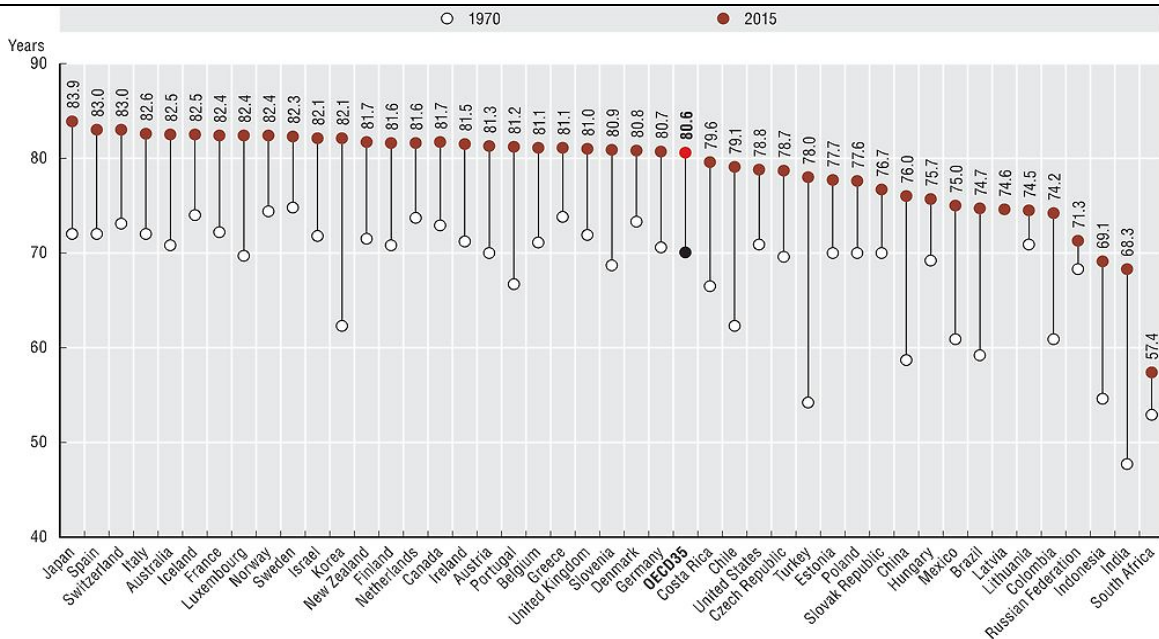
Wellness today is at a watershed moment. The trends report reflects how wellness is poised to take a bigger seat at the health care table (see “The Self-Care Revolution” trend).

It predicts a future industry that will be more inclusive, accessible, and affordable (see the “Adding Color to Wellness,” “The Entertainment Industry Jumps into Wellness,” and “Just Breathe!” trends). How it will basically “get real” and more evidence-based (see “The Future of Immune Health: Stop Boosting, Start Balancing”)—and tackle tougher, more crucial human pain-points (see “Money Out Loud: Financial Wellness Is Finding Its Voice”).

And the report also predicts how wellness will continue to rewrite vast industries, from travel, to architecture and design, to the meetings industry.

For those looking for a simple metric to monitor progress, this author would recommend the life expectancy for the country, society.

Fig.2 Life expectancy at birth (total population, i.e., men and women combined): Japan is now the global leader in longevity



Source: the OECD publication: *Health at a Glance 2017*, Conceptasia, January 2021

Longevity and Wellness

If longevity was purely about science, then there would be no material variation in life expectancies across countries, nor with respect to the improvement in life expectancy over time between countries. The data shows that even when comparing the world's most advanced economies the differences have been marked, Fig.3.

Fig.3 Life expectancy at birth, and its improvement in major countries, 1970-2017, years					
	USA	Japan	Germany	France	U.K.
1970	70.9	72.0	70.6	72.2	71.9
2017	78.6	84.2	81.1	82.6	81.3
Change	+7.7	+12.2	+10.5	+10.4	+9.4

Source: OECD, Conceptasia, January 2021

Sanitation, housing, education, antibiotics and vaccinations and other factors have driven down early and mid-life mortality rates to low levels.

Ongoing improvements relate more to the reduction of late-life mortality rates. Progress here relates to, for example, the avoidance through wellness lifestyles or increased medical probability of surviving, such common causes of late-life mortality as heart disease, strokes, cancer, chronic respiratory diseases, diabetes etc.

Longevity is determined by genetics and by environmental factors. Scientists tell us that the former explains only about 20-30%. Environmental factors can be divided into society-level factors and those determined at the individual level (e.g., diet, lifestyle and so on). Wellness primarily focusses on individuals, and their behaviours.

For more details and references, please see chapter 2 of our book: [J-Wellness 2020 The economics, career options, and investment opportunities](#),

It is time to bid farewell to the trends of 2020:

Fig.4 Global Wellness Trends Report: The Future of Wellness 2020		
	Trend	Author
1	Focus shifts from Sleep to true Circadian Health	Beth McGroarty
2	Aging Rebranded: Positively Cool	Rina Rapheal
3	J-Wellness	Peter Eadon-Clarke
4	Mental Wellness and Technology: Rethinking the Relationship	Rina Raphael
5	Energy Medicine gets Serious	Beth McGroarty et al
6	Organized Religion jumps into Wellness	Rina Raphael
7	The Wellness Sabbatical	Susie Ellis et al
8	The Fertility Boom	Rina Raphael
9	Wellness Music	Beth McGroarty
10	In Wellness We Trust: The Science Behind the Industry	Richard Panek

Source: [2020 Wellness Trends, from Global Wellness Summit](#), Conceptasia, January 2021

In the case of our [J-Wellness trend](#), the good wellness behaviors of Japan that underpin Japan's world-leading life expectancy/longevity were instrumental, in our opinion, in Japan's relatively good Covid-19 experience.

For data and analysis on this, please see our [J-Wellness & Covid-19: Why Japan has had relatively low deaths](#).

Trends should last many years. In the case of J-Wellness we believe it will run for 10-20 years.

The J-Wellness trend text is included over the following pages.

J-Wellness

Connecting to the World

As awareness of the 100-year life society spreads globally, it is natural to look to Japan. In 1965 Japan had 153 centenarians, in 2017 67,824, representing the largest per capita ratio of them in the world. 50% of Japanese citizens born in 2007 are expected to reach 107. There are lessons to be learned from Japan's lengthy leadership in longevity. Japan is not standing still, rather executing exciting innovations on top of its cultural traditions of trust, exacting quality in all matters, and a deep reverence for nature.

Recent years have seen Ikigai, purpose but at a measured pace, Kintsuji, Wabi-sabi, embracing imperfection and transience, Marie Kondo, de-cluttering by auditing the spiritual value of our possessions and Shinrin-Yoku, forest bathing, each become a global phenomenon. Japan is also known for Wellness-related products.

Incense is used to purify, cleanse and relax. With a reputation for the highest quality, Japanese incense sticks have long been exported worldwide. Behind this are deep traditions. Seasoned artisans train for years, with 70% of all production being centred on Awaji-shima, a small island south-west of Kobe city. When the burning of incense moved beyond temples, incense-listening, Koudou, emerged in the 13th century and is still practised today: a ritual-rich game involving the identification of incense aromas. Japanese incense sticks are being followed globally now by wave upon wave of highly distinctive J-Wellness products and techniques.

Connecting to others

Iki-iki Plazas, the Stress Check Program, Social Robots

Social, community wellness and innovating for aging societies are two global mega trends where Japan's policy is to empower individuals and companies. As a WHO (2012) study demonstrated, better health is associated with high "social capital", such as trust between neighbours, repeat interactions, and helpful actions reciprocated. Japan's Iki-iki Plazas, neighbourhood facilities for generational mingling, recreation and learning, are strengthening people's mutual trust. Emerging from Japanese psychological studies, "Iki-iki" captures the subjective aspects of well-being deep within the human mind, such as positiveness, stability of mood, self-acceptance, and life satisfaction. With government support Iki-iki Plazas are spreading locally nationwide.

Japan's Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare stated in its 2012 policy document that mental health is as important as physical health. Since December 2015, all employees in companies of 50 or more people complete mandatory annual stress assessments. When approving this legislation, the Japanese Diet concluded that the Stress Check Program should focus on the primary prevention of mental disorders, not the screening of mental disorders, and that this should be combined with improving the psychosocial work environment. Corporate support programs include Sumitomo

Corporation's Iki-iki Waku-Waku (energy and excitement) Health and Productivity Management program.

The Stress Check Program, and the separate mandatory annual health check for employees, are not expected to stay unique to Japan for long. We expect other countries' national health systems to embrace wellbeing. Japan's corporate leaders are acting as health ambassadors. To quote Miwako Date, President of Mori Trust, at the 2019 GWS in Singapore: Caring for people's comfort and health is essential for enhancing productivity. We have set "Wellness for all" as one of our key visions for real estate development.

Prime Minister Abe's "Council for Designing the 100-year Life Society" concluded in June 2018 with two key recommendations: 1) significant increases in pay for long-term nursing care workers, 2) a "drastic expansion of recurrent education" to enable multi-stage lives. Japan pursues a philosophy of no-one being left behind. Long-term care provision is a crucial test of this, especially since Japan's government is predicting 380,000 care staff vacancies by 2025. Robots are spreading through the nursing care industry to improve productivity of care workers, e.g. physical assistance. Social robots provide psychological support, such as PARO, the Artificial Intelligence-driven interactive furry seal from Tsukuba's National Institute of Advanced Industrial Science & Technology. Studies confirm that PARO reduces anxiety and depression, and by calming down dementia patients, incidents of them wandering off have been reduced. Other social robots include RoBoHon monkey from Sharp and Sony's Aibo puppy dog that was demonstrated at the 2019 GWS in Singapore and gave the hundreds of audience members the experience (and surprise for many) of falling in love within about 30 seconds.

Connecting to technology

J-Beauty, Kao's Future Skin by Fine Fiber Technology and Shiseido's Optune

Reflective of an exacting quality in all matters, J-Beauty is about long-term reliability. This includes, an anti-aging focus, and a simplified beauty regime backed by science. All of this is the antithesis of "fast fashion". In Japan, purity and deep cleansing are culturally based, with morning and evening bathing rituals having supported the original cleansing oils popularized by Shu Uemura. Today's daily routine is typically double cleansing followed by an essence lotion (a clear liquid that hydrates and preps), a serum (a watery liquid with beneficial, usually natural ingredients) and a moisturiser. Facial masks are a weekly activity. Since layering is at the core of J-Beauty, most of the products are of a very light texture resulting in super-hydration of the skin. The goal is effervescent skin, "bihaku", a bright skin tone, and the elimination of sun-related skin damage. Products emphasize natural, functional, non-toxic, sustainable ingredients. A leading essence lotion is the SK II facial treatment essence, with the patented key ingredient Pitera (galactomyces ferment filtrate), a blend of 50 micronutrients with anti-aging properties. J-Beauty's technology, innovation leadership is leading to revolutionary products:

Future Skin by Fine Fiber Technology was launched in December 2019 under the Kao brand "est" and the Kanebo brand "SENSAI" combining an essence with an ultra-fine membrane, delivered by a

diffuser, for a night-time skin care routine. In addition to protecting against dryness and maintaining a moisture rich environment, the membrane activates protein expression in the skin. The translucent membrane stays in place overnight like a second skin, which is then peeled away the following morning. Kao expects to advance Fine Fiber Technology into make-up, through being able to create a natural look by covering pores, blotches and uneven skin colour.

Shiseido opened a 76,000 square-foot “Global innovation center” in late 2018, committed to cross-discipline research, dedicated to delivering the future. Visitors are encouraged to explore the facilities. The full launch of their new Optune product in July 2019, saw the arrival of data-driven, automated, personalized skincare. An Internet of Things (IoT) system with a dedicated iPhone app that analyses, prepares and dispenses the optimum serum & moisturizer for the user’s skin. The dispenser has 80,000 possible skincare combinations. Skin quality analysis from a smartphone photo and sleep data used to detect biological rhythm disruption are combined with locational environmental data (time, temperature, humidity, pollen, PM2.5 air quality). Users are also able to input data on their mood.

Connecting to nature

Shinrin-Yoku (Forest Bathing), therapeutic Onsens and yummy Shojin Ryori vegan Temple food

Japan’s deep reverence for nature also acts as preventative healthcare. For example, Forest Bathing began in 1982 with a Japanese national health program. Coordinated by the Forest Therapy Society, there are now 62 official healing forests, 1,200 certified guides, with over 2.5 million people walking the healing forest trails in 2018. Studies support the breadth of health benefits of connecting all five senses to nature, from reduced blood pressure, lower stress and improved cardiovascular and metabolic health to lower blood-sugar levels, improved concentration, memory and energy. The phytoncide in cedar and cypress has been shown to have calming effects on people, as well as providing a boost to the immune system, with one study having shown a 53% increase in the count of the body’s natural killer (NK) cells after two days in these forests.

Dr. Qing Li of the Nippon Medical School in Tokyo and President of the Forest Therapy Society, who also spoke at the 2019 GWS, notes that we spend 93% of our time indoors, leading to a nature-deficit disorder. As the inbound tourism boom is discovering, Japan has an incredible wealth of natural assets to facilitate recovery: in addition to the 62 healing forests there are 20,972 Onsens (hot springs), two-thirds of the global total, providing a rustic, authentic, hyper-specific Wellness experience. In addition to the medicinal benefits of the various minerals in the water, deep-soaking bathing has thermotherapeutic effects (a higher body temperature stretches capillaries improving circulation, increasing metabolism and reducing fatigue), water pressure effects (improving the flow of your blood and lymph fluid) and buoyancy effects. The latter, by reducing the body’s weight to one tenth of what it normally is, allows muscles and joints to rest, enabling tensions in the body to dissipate. Japanese bathing influences are appearing worldwide. The new Shou Sugi Ban House in the Hamptons, USA, has a Japanese design, hinoki soaking tubs, tea ceremonies etc.

The 2018 Monastery Stay & Meditative, Spiritual Cuisine legislation opened Japanese temples to lodging tourists, enabling visitors to access their inner Zen with meditation, silence and the famous vegetarian cuisine that Buddhist monasteries offer known as Shojin Ryori. Shojin means a devotion to pursue a perfect state of mind, whilst ryori means food. Dating back to the 6th century, it is prepared around soybean-based foods like tofu and incorporates seasonal vegetables, wild mountain plants and nuts. Meat, fish or other animal products, pungent flavours like garlic and onion are excluded. The monks employ two “rules of five”: five colours (green, red, yellow, black and white) and five flavours (sweet, sour, salty, umami, bitter). Encouraging contemplation and appreciation, the cuisine leads to balance and alignment of the body, mind and spirit.

Connecting through the Olympics to the world

Move to be Well, the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, an irresistible comprehensive culture of Wellness

With no gender or age limitations, Japanese martial arts such as Judo, Karate and Aikido remain wildly popular contributing to Japan’s overall strong showing in the physical activity marketplace. The 2019 GWI *Move to be Well* report, ranked Japan third in the total physical activity market behind the United States and China. Japan has a relatively high recreational physical activities participation rate of 69.6% (United States 58.8%, China 48.6%).

Along with the billions watching through global media, the expected 600,000 overseas visitors to the July-August 2020 Tokyo Olympics will see more than just the sports events. Jon Omori, the Tokyo-based Special Advisor and Coordinator for the United States Olympic Committee comments: “Beyond the sports stadiums, visitors will experience Olympic standard focus and dedication in everyday activities in Japan”. Whilst highly distinctive J-Wellness products and techniques are gaining wider recognition, we believe the Olympics will reveal the holistically whole of J-Wellness, Japan’s irresistible comprehensive culture of wellness. The resulting benefits to global wellness are expected to make the upcoming Olympics the most consequential ever.

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