

Writer Judy Chapman

The One-Stop Wellness Club

As the wellness landscape continues to grow, shift and morph, the concept of membership-wellness, fitness and social clubs are being reimagined

We are living in the age of self-care where ‘prevention is better than cure’, and our work life increasingly flows into our personal life. We are busy and time is a luxury. Traipsing all over the city to go to a fitness class, see a nutritionist, have an acupuncture session and eat a healthy meal no longer feels realistic.

In New York, for example, the community space concept brand Wework has recently

launched Rise by We, a place where you can workout or attend a yoga class, have a sauna, book a personal coaching session and hang out with friends afterwards.

Avi Yehiel, head of wellness at WeWork’s explains, “Rise by We is our first wellness facility that offers a complete spa experience under one roof. No more jumping from studio to studio; here you can find it all.” Rise offers a plethora of community-based

fitness, multiple boutique studios and personal training, wellness programmes and a juice bar.

Club W in Australia is a new breed of female-only wellness social clubs springing up around the globe. The unique space offers a fitness and movement studio, teahouse, educational and social hub all in one. There are over 200 virtual classes a day including yoga, Pilates, dance, stretch

and meditation, delivered in ‘bite-sized’ 10, 20 and 30-minute classes making them convenient for urban dwellers. There are also wellness pods for nutrition, life coaching and relationship workshops, and treatment rooms for massages and manicures.

The one-stop wellness club movement is not only driven by our increasing awareness of wellness. There’s also a need for a sense of belonging and community. According to a Global Wellness Institute (GWI) report, loneliness is a serious wellness crisis. Research shows that people who are socially connected not only live longer, but are less likely to succumb to diseases such as heart disease and cancer.

Yehiel explains that Rise is very much based on their ethos of ‘building a world where no one feels alone’, an extension of WeWork’s commitment to wellness; anyone can become a member whether or not they’re members of WeWork or WeLive. All Rise members also receive a complimentary physio Symbio PT evaluation with a personalised exercise programme.

“It is a place where they can recharge, restore and connect with others” ~ Tony de Leede

Fitness entrepreneur Tony de Leede says, “Club W is for women baby boomers who I describe as the ‘forgotten generation’ looking for a second home or third place to unwind and connect.”

Adds de Leed, “I believe Club W fills a huge gap in the market for a modern space



where women can immerse themselves in wellness. It is a place where they can recharge, restore and connect with others. I refer to it as a second home – an affordable home – that’s based on community and activity, and where you feel comfortable and safe.’

Memberships at Club W are an affordable AU\$19.50 per week and members can view class schedules and book treatments and view podcasts on the Club W app.

At the other end of the sale, monthly memberships for the upscale The Well in New York will cost US\$375 per month when it opens this summer. Targeting urban professionals, memberships include a dedicated health concierge; unlimited yoga and meditation classes; exclusive access to fitness classes and full use of the communal areas. The 13,000sqft luxury space features a full-service spa with co-ed relaxation areas, yoga and meditation studios, a private

training studio gym, reflexology lounge and an organic Ayurvedic-inspired restaurant and vitamin bar.

The Well will offer integrated, proactive and personalised programmes to help people maintain balance, combining Western medicine with Eastern healing into customised health plans.

There’s a reported 1,000-strong waiting list for memberships already and little wonder, with celebrity physician Frank Lipman M.D. signed up as chief medical officer.

Of the move towards one-stop wellness, de Leede says, “I was at Club W yesterday morning and we had the weekly group of about 20 women sitting in the community lounge knitting, drinking tea, and having a chat.” He continues, “The words that come to mind about our space are cosy, comfortable, community and non-intimidating which is real well-being.” 🌿

