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Tracking the Growth of Wellness

At the WWD Wellness Forum, speakers from all areas of the industry discussed the future of the expanding category.

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October 7, 2022, 8:00am



Miraval Berkshires meditation specialist Will Boyce. KREG HOLT

At WWD's first live **Wellness** (<https://wwd.com/tag/wellness/>) Forum, held on Sept. 28 in New York City, experts from leading **wellness** (<https://wwd.com/fashion-news/fashion-scoops/alchemy-43-free-botox-injections-1235382269/>) brands and

retailers spoke about the future of the category, which is expected to be a \$7 trillion global opportunity by 2025.

While speakers hailed from all areas of well-being, including fitness, mental health, skin care, sexual wellness, plant-based medicine and ingestibles, common threads ran throughout. Four major themes emerged from the day's conversations:

As the COVID-19 pandemic has subsided, consumers are still prioritizing their health and well-being routines. Chief executive officer of health and well-being at Unilever, Jostein Solheim, explained wellness is not a category, it's a lifestyle. "Putting the user's needs first is what makes it so exciting," he said, "and such a great growth opportunity."

To that end, focusing on **condition-based products and services is on the rise**. As consumers are more educated than ever, they are seeking products geared toward specific concerns such as hair loss, the effects of hormonal fluctuations, pain or sleep-related issues. Brands like Asutra, Act+ Acre and Skinfix are developing products with specific conditions in mind.

With that being said, **consumers are seeking science-backed solutions**. They are researching ingredients and reading clinicals. Amy Gordinier, CEO of clinically validated brand Skinfix, said science is the brand's priority when developing products. "We want to understand the skin concern from top to bottom. We want to understand the root cause of symptoms," she said. "When we go to formulate, we make sure that every single constituent in this formula is playing a role."

Consumers want to feel seen and heard. Actress and model Brooke Shields kicked off her session by asking women older than 40 in the room to raise their hand if they felt unseen. As many raised a hand, Shields emphasized why she started her platform Beginning Is Now, a community for women to embrace life and wellness. Éva Goicochea discussed how she brought sexual wellness to the masses with her brand Maude after discovering consumer demand for intimate products was widely ignored. SoulCycle founder Julie Rice discussed how her new company, Peoplehood, was borne out of the insight that many people today don't feel heard. "The next wave in wellness will be social relational health," Rice said. During a Peoplehood workshop, "you get to process your own thoughts. You have aha moments because people hold space for you to think. You also get to be generous and listen to other people," Rice said.

But the day wasn't all work and no play. Fitness instructor Melissa Wood-Tepferberg kicked off her session with a short arm workout to get attendees in the wellness mood. Miraval Berkshires meditation specialist Will Boyce led a short session, during which he asked

attendees to imagine their heart was a colorful light and to send those beams to loved ones. While these activity lasted less than 10 minutes, both instructors explained that's all it takes to implement a wellness ritual.