



**Horwath HTL**  
*Health & Wellness*

INDUSTRY REPORT

# Mental Wellness and Alternative Healing Methods

MAY 2019

As mental health problems have recently been on the rise worldwide, Horwath HTL Health and Wellness set out to explore determinants of mental wellness in society as well as the multiple healing methods available to the public, both traditional and alternative ones.

For this white paper, Horwath HTL Health and Wellness combined desktop research with first-hand knowledge gained from mental health professionals practicing in Thailand and Brazil. We were fortunate to talk to Dr. Paul Thisayakorn, a psychiatrist in mental health rehabilitation in Bangkok, head of Body and Mind Clinic and doctor at

Bangkok Hospital, Dr. Carlos Henrique Salles Rosa, head of Projeto Livre, a rehabilitation clinic in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and Dr. Christopher Jensen who currently works in the United Kingdom in surgery and emergency medicine. The aim of this research is to collect the most accurate and up-to-date information on the status of mental health in different societies. The discussion is centred on the causes of mental health issues, known methods of treatment, the stigma in society surrounding mental health and available help, alternative healing, and how mental wellness can be better integrated into hospitality.



#### Disclaimer:

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## What Is Mental Wellness?

### Definition Of Mental Wellness

The World Health Organization ("WHO") defines mental health as:

**"a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity".**

What is often overlooked is that mental health, as per its definition, goes beyond the absence of mental disorders and disabilities, and represents a state of mental well-being in which the individual realises his/her own abilities, is able to manage daily life stresses, be efficient and contribute to the community (e.g. socialising). It is a vital part of being and our collective and individual ability to think, emote, interact with one another, make a living, and enjoy life.

### Determinants Of Mental Health

The Global Wellness Institute ("GWI") released a white paper in 2018 entitled Mental Wellness: The Pathways, Evidence and Horizons, introducing an in-depth study of mental wellness and mental health treatments. The white paper explains that the state of an individual's mental wellbeing begins prior to conception, and similarly to other genetic conditions (e.g. bipolar disorder), the mental health of both parents will greatly influence the mental health of a child.

The WHO has synthesized the state of mental health into three categories:

- Individual attributes and behaviours (these characteristics can either be genetic factors or personality traits);
- Social and economic circumstances;
- Environmental factors.

More specifically, poor mental health can be attributed to social changes, social exclusion, stressful work conditions, discrimination, an unhealthy lifestyle, physical ill-health, human rights violation, and social inequality. The latter is known as the most common factor. Dr. Thisayakorn also underlines that anxiety can be caused by tensions within society. These determinants can begin before birth or anytime throughout an individual's life and may vary significantly as the individual moves through his/her life (Our World in Data, 2018).

Life brings many uncomfortable situations, some of which may have a stronger and longer-lasting impact on a person. According to a study conducted by the American Institute of Stress in 2017 and Dr. Jensen, the following are among the most common situations that cause stress, anxiety and/or depression for an individual on a daily basis:

- Financial pressure: 62% of adults report constantly worrying about their financial situation, more specifically the loss of a job, reduced retirement fund and medical expenses;
- Work life: 61% of all working adults report some level of stress, more specifically co-worker tensions, bosses and workload.
- Family life: many individuals report feeling stress or anxiety due to family issues, such as divorce, separation or bereavement.

These stressful life events can lead an individual to feel either situationally depressed or clinically depressed. It is important to note that there are two different kinds of depression, one which consists of an "adjustment disorder with depressed mood" (Medical News Today, 2018) and stems from a traumatic experience or a radical change in life, and the other which is more severe and can have a profound impact on the daily function of an individual's life. Both conditions equally present significant challenges to the mental wellbeing.



## Mental Wellness In Society

Globally, WHO statistics show that more than 300 million people suffer from depression and approximately 260 million suffer from anxiety disorders. It is also reported that one in four people experience one or another kind of

mental health condition. The below table outlines some alarming mental health statistics sourced from Harvard Medical School, Fortune, and the Anxiety and Depression Association of America.

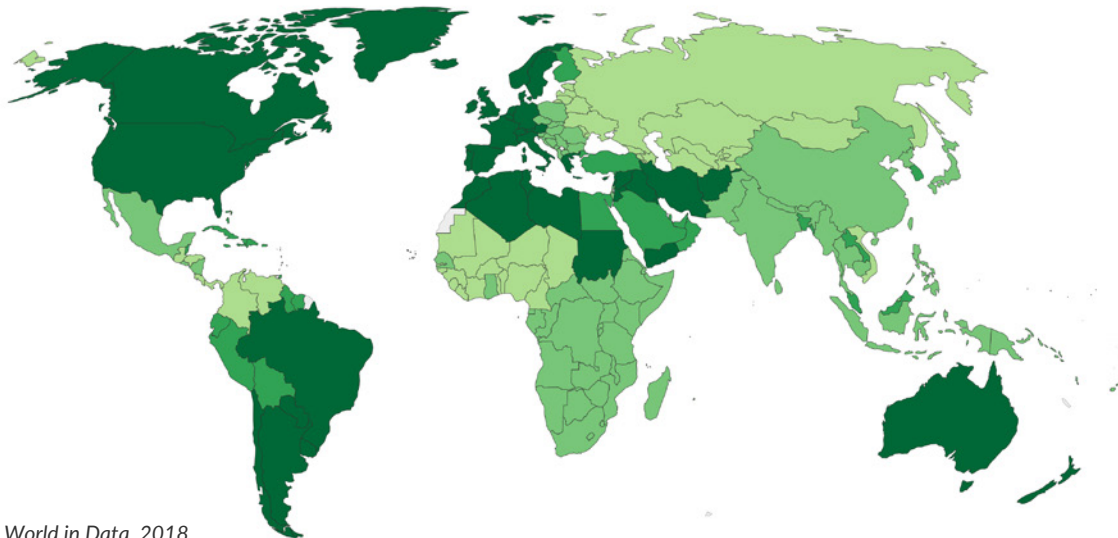
### Population Statistics

- 8.5% of women are diagnosed with depression.
- 4.8% of men are diagnosed with depression.
- Depression is the leading cause of disability worldwide.
- It is estimated that 15% of the adult population will experience depression at one point during their lifetime.
- Almost 50% of people diagnosed with depression are also diagnosed with anxiety disorder.

### Treatment Statistics

- Only 41% of adults suffering from a mental health condition receive help.
- Less than 20% of people displaying depressive symptoms seek help.
- Only 37% of people suffering from anxiety disorders receive treatment.
- 2/3 of people do not feel the necessary relief with the first antidepressant they try.
- At least 4% of young adults who have reported mental health issues decide to forego treatment.

*Map displaying the share of population with anxiety disorders*



Source: Our World in Data, 2018

Despite having known about it for centuries, it is only recently that people have started to recognise the effect that a person's mental wellness can have on their life. In the past, individuals who sought help were seen as incapable, and unfortunately such perception is still apparent in many cultures worldwide as of today. This is a barrier that the WHO along with the United Nations ("UN") is attempting to overcome so that the necessary care may be provided to those in need. Dr. Rosa shares that in Brazil the barrier is due to rigidity in public policies regarding interventions, which discourages individuals from seeking help. However, the situation in Thailand is different, as explained by Dr.

Thisayakorn. The Thai Health Department is concerned about mental health issues and the inability to talk about it. The government has, therefore, launched a campaign to provide knowledge about depression and increase awareness so that people may freely talk about their mental health issues, without the fear of being ostracised. Dr. Jensen adds that Thailand has always been at the forefront of patient information, as illustrated during the HIV epidemic in the 1970s. Indeed, Thailand was one of the only countries to tackle the disease head-on through robust campaigns directed at changing the population's behaviour and communicate any prevention measures possible.



## Mental Health In Hospitality

The World Economic Forum has forecasted mental health issues to cost the world USD 16 trillion by 2030, a cost that can be avoided provided the right measures are taken. An example of a measure would be wellness retreats offering mental health programmes. Dr. Rosa explains that retreats aimed at improving mental wellbeing, such as the De-Stress programme at Kamalaya Koh Samui in Thailand or the SHA Anti-Stress Programme at SHA Wellness Clinic in Spain, have proven to be rewarding to patients and guests suffering from mental disorders. However, one must not confuse these retreats with rehabilitation centres, which typically seek to restore an individual to health through training and therapy after major life events, addiction, illnesses or accidents. The programmes offered at wellness retreats generally do not include any prescribed synthetic medication or extensive therapy sessions. Instead, they are comprised of health checks, prescribed meal plans, mind and body sessions, workshops, and treatments.

Some retreats incorporate Traditional Chinese Medicine or Ayurveda as a means of further helping individuals with their mental health issues. Wellness retreats intend to maintain an organic, medication-free environment and promote natural therapies instead. This can be witnessed at Vana, a world-leading wellness retreat located in India, who, in addition to personalising their programmes, involve an emotional healing aspect aimed at helping the guests with any anxiety or stress they may be experiencing. Their programmes, therefore, incorporate a preliminary questionnaire, consultations, treatments varying between different Ayurvedic therapies, Tibetan healing methods, Traditional Chinese Medicine, yoga and meditation sessions, nature immersion, health conscious cuisine, and a digital detox. Vana strongly encourages its guests to journal their feelings, read, or meditate instead of spending time on their online devices. These all-inclusive programmes are generally higher-priced than the average, thus making it not necessarily affordable to everyone. However, there is a growing number of wellness retreats offering less extensive service platforms or in less luxurious surroundings, but that still aim to help the guests through their emotional healing.

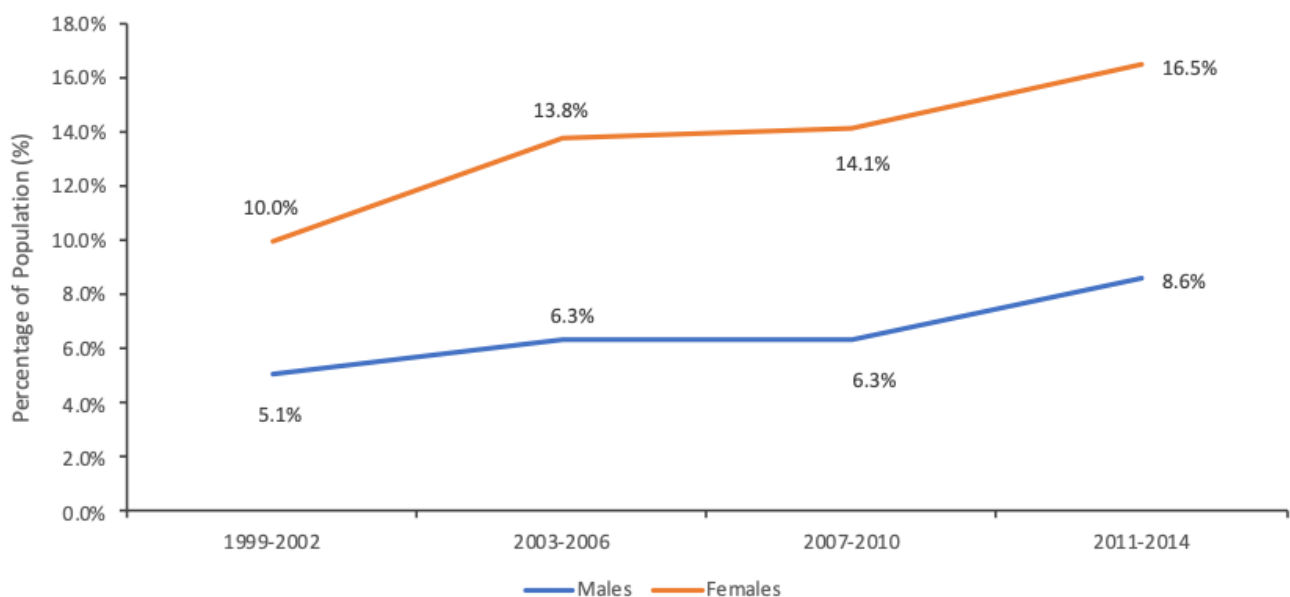
## Traditional Healing Methods

The following section introduces the traditional method of healing depression and anxiety disorders through antidepressants. It highlights the effects that the synthetic medication is intended to generate on an individual, potential side effects, and their respective efficiency. The traditional way of treating either depression or anxiety is through prescribed medication, i.e. antidepressants. The latter are medications that aim to relieve symptoms of depression, anxiety disorders, seasonal affective disorder, as well as other conditions. These drugs generally work by attempting to balance the chemicals in the brain, namely neurotransmitters that affect an individual's mood and emotions. The medication activates the neurotransmitters, causing the individual to feel more motivated. According

to Dr. Eric Endlich, a clinical psychologist based in Boston, "Antidepressants can help jump-start mood and give people the boost they need to get over the symptoms of their depression. This often allows them to start doing the things they enjoy again and make better choices for themselves, which also contributes to a better mood".

Antidepressants were initially developed in the 1950s and have become progressively more common in the last 20 years. To date, there are almost 30 different kinds of antidepressants that exist. One of the reasons for the strong diversity is that any antidepressant may lose its effectiveness, either after a few months or several years, as the brain becomes less responsive to the drug and develops a tolerance towards it (Harvard Medical School, 2014).

### *Trends in antidepressant use among persons aged 12 and over, by gender: United States, 1999–2014*

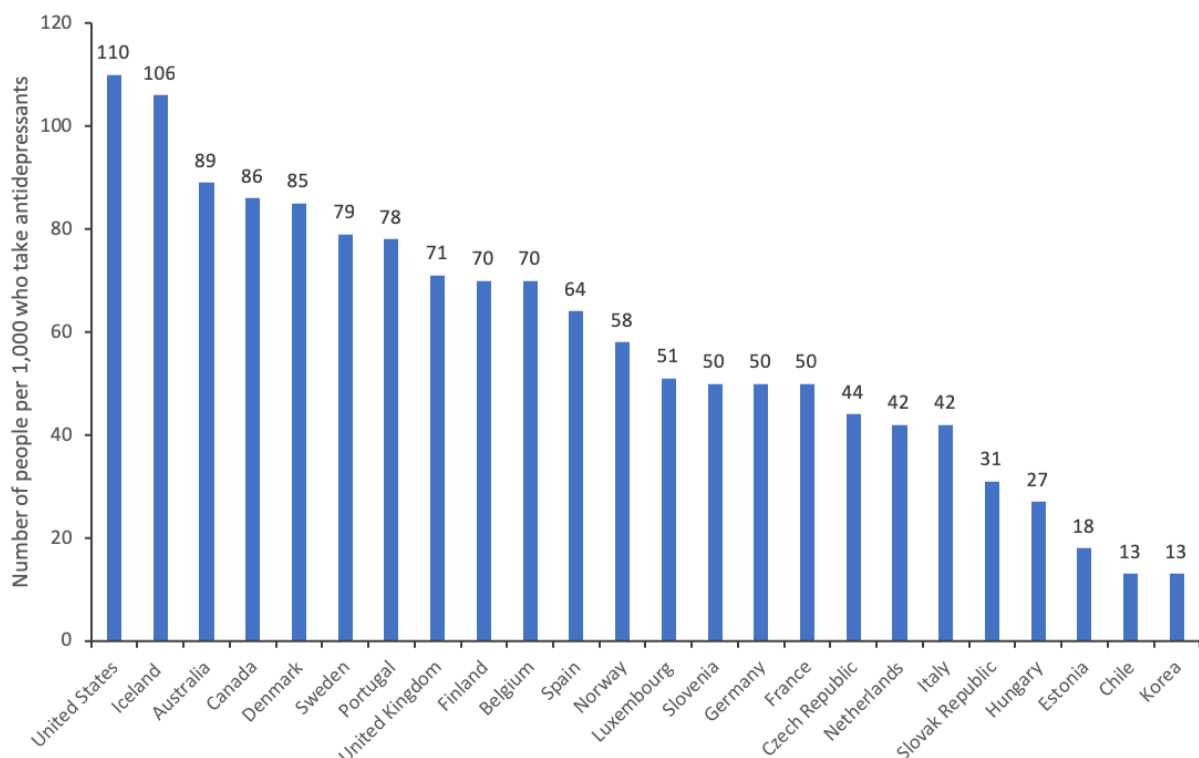


Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2017

However, taking antidepressant medication is not without its side effects. Indeed, as well as causing nausea, vomiting, increased appetite, weight gain, loss of sexual desire, fatigue and drowsiness, insomnia, dry mouth, blurred vision, constipation, agitation, irritability, and anxiety, antidepressants can also increase the risk of suicide. As the drug is meant to boost motivation, a person who previously had suicidal thoughts might, thus, be motivated by them to follow through with such thoughts. Pharmaceutical companies have, therefore, been instructed to add warnings about these serious dangers, particularly the risk of suicide. In addition to the side effects of taking antidepressants, there is also the individual's reaction when they stop the treatment. The drugs initially were intended as a short-term treatment for episodic mood problems, and to be taken for between six to nine months at the most. They were originally approved for short-term use as studies had only lasted approximately two months. However, Dr. Anthony Kendrick, a professor of primary care at the University of Southampton in the United Kingdom states, "Some

people are essentially being parked on these drugs for convenience's sake because it's difficult to tackle the issue of taking them off". A study conducted by the American Psychiatric Association in 2017 on 250 long-term users of antidepressants relays that about half of them who reduced their prescription rated the withdrawal as "severe". Also, nearly half of those who attempted to stop taking the drug were unable to do so due to the fierceness of the symptoms. Another study was carried out by the University of Auckland in collaboration with the University of East London in 2016. The study, consisting of 180 long-term users indicated that 72% of the participants demonstrated withdrawal symptoms and almost half of them claimed to feel addicted to the drugs. It is estimated that 15 million people have been taking antidepressants for at least five years, a rate that has doubled since 2010 and tripled since 2000. As of 2018, approximately 25 million adults have been taking medication for at least two years, which represents an increase of 60% since 2010.

#### Countries with the highest antidepressant usage



Source: Business Insider, 2016

## Alternative Healing Methods

Alternative healing methods refer to any treatment or therapy that is not common in Western healing practices, which revolve primarily around medication. We believe it is important to discuss the use of other possible treatments for mental health issues, aside from synthetic medication, as the use of antidepressants is on the rise and presenting some concerning side effects. However, it is important to note that all is relative to the degree of depression.

### Hypnosis

Mayo Clinic defines hypnosis as “a trance-like state in which you have heightened focus and concentration”. According to Harvard lecturer Irving Kirsch, hypnosis is a legitimate form of treatment that can help cure anxiety and stress. Hypnosis is one of the most evidence-backed non-drug adjunct treatment for depression and many other conditions. Research has shown that hypnosis can alter a person’s immune function in order to offset stress, and in some ways can be compared to guided meditation. Hypnosis aims to help people have more control over their thoughts.

Statistics demonstrate that hypnosis can strongly affect approximately 20% of people; however, at the same time, about the same percentage of people do not show much reaction. The rest react only somewhat strongly to hypnosis. As made evident from these statistics, approximately 80% react to hypnosis, strongly suggesting that it is an effective alternative treatment for mental issues such as anxiety and stress.

In 2018, Six Senses Koh Samui included a diverse selection of alternative treatments into their Visiting Practitioners program, including hypnotherapy. Another retreat located in the United States, namely The Peaks Resort and Spa, has featured a hypnotherapist on-site as part of their wellness treatment menu since 2017. This demonstrates that hypnosis is slowly but surely making its entry into the wellness hospitality environment.

### Ayahuasca

Ayahuasca is a brew from South America that is known for its hallucinogenic properties. It is made from the *Banisteriopsis caapi*, a tropical vine originating from the Amazon rainforest, and is prepared by cutting up the vine and boiling it. Preparation of the brew takes several hours, spanning across a few days. It has been part of the

Amazonian culture for centuries, and is used primarily for healing and spiritual awakening.

The effects are centred on visual hallucinations, which come and go, changes in auditory perception, an enhanced rate of thinking that focuses on personal psychology, and having heightened emotional reactions. The so-called ‘trip’ lasts approximately four hours.

Studies have shown that Ayahuasca can have a positive effect on people with depression, helping them heal from the disorder. In a recent study conducted by Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, 29 patients with severe depression were separated into two groups where one was given Ayahuasca and the other a placebo. The day following the trial, it was observed that the Ayahuasca group had scored significantly lower on the depression tests as opposed to the placebo group, remarkably faster than with traditional antidepressants. The research also noted that Ayahuasca had lasting effects as the scientists tested both groups a week later where again the Ayahuasca group scored lower on the depression tests. Other studies have shown that at least 64% of people who have taken Ayahuasca had the severity of their depression decrease by 50% or more.

Recently, there has been a substantial increase in research about Ayahuasca. Many people have been traveling to either Peru or Brazil in order to experience the effects of the brew, so much so that retreats specializing in Ayahuasca administration have been opening up around the world. One of the most prominent Ayahuasca retreats is Rythmia, located in Costa Rica. The entire process is administered by professionals and in tightly controlled environments, which allow the guests to feel at ease when experiencing Ayahuasca. It is crucial that these treatments are administered in a supervised setting with medical assistance, if necessary, especially in a hospitality context, as some of the negative side effects from Ayahuasca include nausea, vomiting, increased blood pressure, and diarrhea. Dr. Rosa advises that more research must be done on the effects that Ayahuasca may have on a person’s mental wellbeing, as they have been detrimental in some cases. Ayahuasca retreats, generally complement Ayahuasca ceremonies with other wellness services, such as workshops about discovering oneself, spa treatments, organic farm-to-table meals, as well as medical evaluations performed by certified physicians.



## Medical Marijuana

Medical marijuana is not the same as recreational marijuana, which can in fact lead to an increase in anxiety and depression, and become addictive. The key difference is the quantity of tetrahydrocannabinols ("THC") versus the quantity of cannabidiol ("CBD"), which are cannabinoid compounds located within the marijuana plant. According to Canadian Cannabis Clinics, recreational marijuana has a much higher content of THC than CBD, which is more of a psychoactive compound whereas CBD is not. THC is known to trigger the amygdala region of the brain responsible for fear, anxiety, and paranoia. On the other hand, CBD is known to have many medical benefits and does not produce the "high" effect. According to Healthline, a popular online health information website, CBD is effective in treating anxiety and depression among other diseases (such as epilepsy, seizures, gastrointestinal disorder, and other wasting diseases). Together, THC (given in smaller amounts) and CBD can enable an individual to recover from anxiety and depression.

CBD International explains that the way CBD interacts with the body and helps decrease anxiety and depression is by interfacing with the body's own natural endocannabinoid systems ("ECS"). The ECS is located in each cell of the human body and is responsible for many body capacities such as sleep, appetite, memory, mood, pain perception, and stress recuperation. CBD also interlinks with the gamma-aminobutyric ("GABA"), a neurotransmitter in the body whose role is to transfer messages from one brain cell to another. Acting through both body components, CBD will have a greater influence enabling the body to reduce anxiety, unwind and relax muscles that are pent-up from stress.

Currently, there have not been many studies conducted on the medical benefits of medical marijuana as it is classified as a "Schedule 1" drug (along with deadly drugs such as heroin), thereby prohibiting studies to be performed. This fact was confirmed by Dr. Rosa, who also added that the lack of studies may hinder a more realistic view on medical marijuana, being that it could potentially be beneficial in treating diseases. There is a perpetual belief that marijuana is more of a health impact to society than evidence actually proves. The American Medical Institute, among many others, continuously calls for a reclassification of the drug to Schedule II. This reclassification would acknowledge that while there are dangers surrounding marijuana intake, it also has many medical benefits. However, countries are either starting to legalise marijuana or adopting a policy of

decriminalisation. Some of the countries that have legalised the use of medical marijuana are: Argentina, Australia, Bermuda, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Germany, Greece, Israel, Italy, the Netherlands, Peru, Poland, Sri Lanka, Thailand, the United Kingdom, and the majority of US states. The list keeps growing every year, thereby demonstrating the increasing acceptance of medical marijuana benefits. According to the Brightfield Group, the CBD industry is predicted to reach a market value of USD 22 billion by 2022, a growth that many hospitality establishments, varying from retreats to restaurants and cafés, seek to benefit from by integrating CBD into their offering. For instance, Glen Ivy Hot Springs Resort, located just outside of Los Angeles, offers CBD oil massages and CBD infused water. Moreover, restaurants and pop-up food stalls have also started combining CBD with their dishes and beverages, enabling the individual to benefit from its health components through a culinary experience.

## Psilocybin Mushrooms

Psilocybin mushrooms, also known as "magic mushrooms" or "shrooms", are fungi that contain psilocybin, which is a naturally occurring psychedelic compound. Along with Ayahuasca, they are often used in Mesoamerican spiritual and religious rituals. However, they are also known to be effective in treating anxiety, depression, and other illnesses such as headaches and addiction. The Guardian published an article in 2017, detailing a study performed at Imperial College London on depressed patients and the administration of psilocybin mushrooms. The researchers took before and after scans of the patients' brains, as well as monitored brain functions in order to understand how the mushroom could alleviate depression. The scans showed that through the effect of the drug, the brain had rewired the activity of key brain circuits responsible for depression. The effects lasted up until 6 months after a single dose of psilocybin mushrooms was taken.

Unlike medical marijuana, the psychedelic effect cannot be separated from their use. Therefore, it is recommended that if the use of psilocybin mushrooms were to be legalised, it would be in a tightly controlled environment, as overuse can lead to an increase in anxiety and a distortion of the individual's perception of the world, amongst others. Effects include, but are not limited to, openness to feelings and thoughts usually avoided in day-to-day life. Similarly to medical marijuana, there have not been many studies conducted to date as psilocybin mushrooms are also categorised as a Schedule 1 drug. However, recently in the

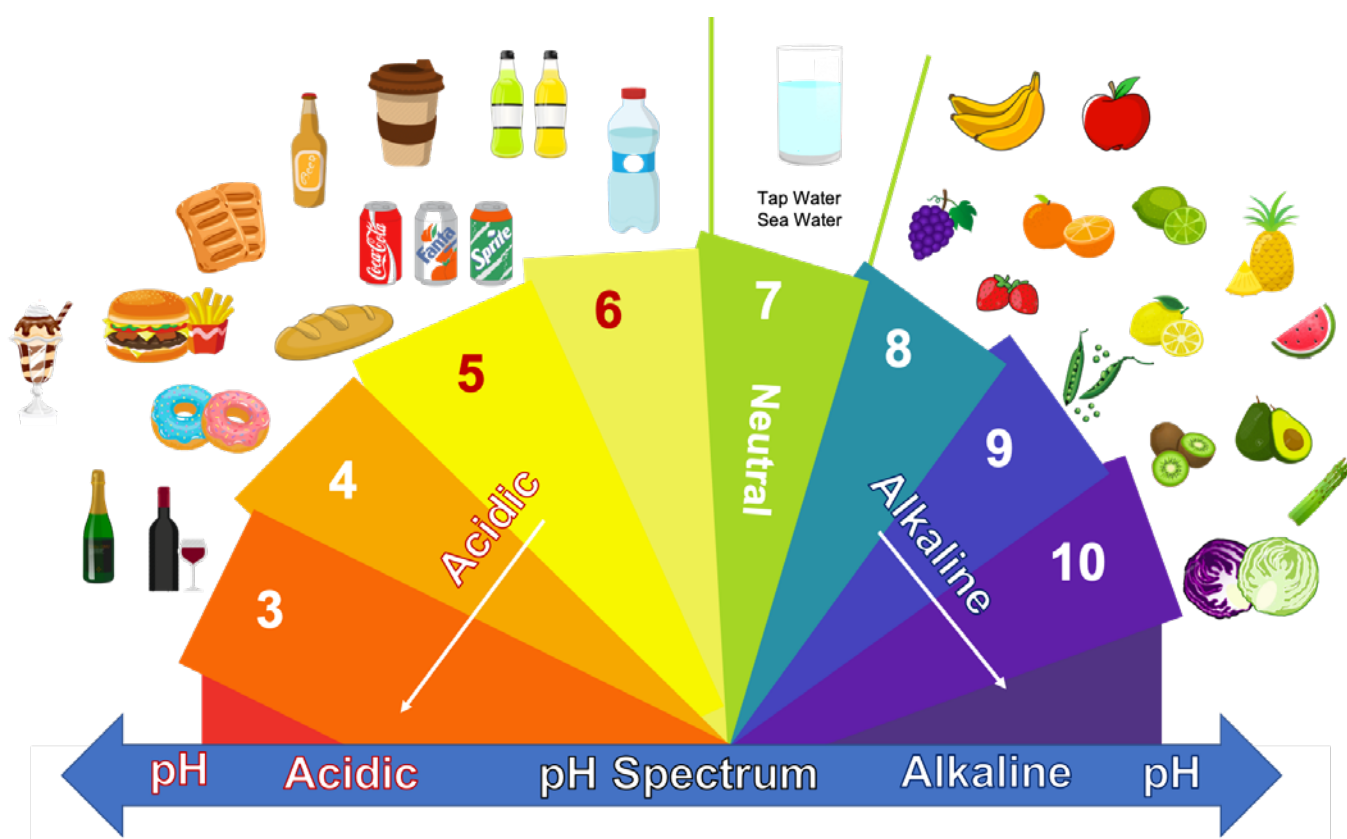
United States, the FDA and DEA have allowed some small and highly controlled studies on the potential medical use of psilocybin. Furthermore, the municipality of Apeldoorn in the Netherlands hosts retreats in which it is possible to experience the effects of psilocybin mushrooms in a safe and legal environment. In order to supervise these treatments most effectively, the retreats only host groups of between 10 and 20 people. Guests include those who wish to experiment with the drug for leisure purposes, as well as those who seek its medical benefits to help with anxiety and depression. This growing trend of consumers seeking to experience psilocybin mushrooms in a safe and controlled environment could be an opportunity for the hospitality industry. Indeed, wellness retreats could further differentiate their service platform by creating packages that include psilocybin therapies or simply offering one-time psilocybin experiences. However, it is important to note that this concept would depend entirely on the legality of psilocybin in the respective country.

## Nutrition

Along with medication and therapy, nutrition plays an important role in a person's cause and recovery from depression. The famous expression "we are what we eat" talks not only about the physical but also the mental side of the body. It is well known that our diet greatly affects how we eat, sleep, feel, and think. A diet that includes high-quality foods containing minerals, vitamins, and antioxidants, helps protect the brain from oxidative stress (a reaction of the body to not ingesting enough antioxidants to counter the harmful effects of free radicals, molecules that may be damaging to cells, proteins, and DNA). On the other hand, a diet containing refined sugar and processed foods promotes oxidative stress and inflammation, and decreases the body's regulation of insulin. The GWI's research adds that:

“Diet is a key modifiable intervention target of prevention of the initial incidence of common mental disorders”.

### Food and beverages along the PH spectrum



Source: Mind Body Green, 2019

The foods that are considered to be rich in anti-depressant nutrients are oysters, watercress, and spinach. Studies have also shown that people who take probiotics, such as kefir and kombucha, as well as vitamin supplements see their anxiety and stress levels decrease while their mental wellbeing improves, as opposed to people who do not ingest probiotics. Other studies have demonstrated that those who follow the Mediterranean diet or Japanese diet, which are high in vegetables, fruits, unprocessed grains, fish, seafood, modest amounts of meat and dairy, and void of refined sugar and processed foods, have 25% to 35% lower risk of depression. Such diet was recommended by both Dr. Thisayakorn and Dr. Rosa, who urge their patients to eat healthier in order to combat mental health issues. This is contrary to those who follow a Western diet, which contains more lean meat, dairy products, as well as higher levels of sugar and processed foods. Finally, the Mental Health Foundation from the UK notes that:

**“Nearly two thirds of those who do not report daily mental health problems eat fresh fruit or fruit juice every day, compared with less than half of those who do report daily mental health problems.”**

This pattern is similar for fresh vegetables and salad. Those who report some level of mental health problems also eat fewer healthy foods (fresh fruit and vegetables, organic foods and meals made from scratch) and more unhealthy foods (chips, crisps, chocolate, ready meals, and takeaways). According to the Molecular Psychiatry journal, the Mediterranean diet is able to lower the risk of developing depression by 66%. Researchers claim that the anti-inflammatory and anti-oxidant components found in the foods help protect the brain and system from oxidative stress and inflammation.

## Exercise

It is well known that exercise helps a person lose weight and gain muscle; however, exercise also combats health conditions and diseases, improves mood, boosts energy, promotes better sleep, and is a means of socialising and having fun. Half of these benefits centre on the mental

wellbeing of an individual. Exercise enables the body to release endorphins, which are hormones secreted by the brain to help the body relieve itself of pain and stress, and boost happiness. Research has shown that exercise is a successful treatment for depression, and Dr. Micheal Craig Miller, assistant professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School states that:

**“For some people it [exercise] works as well as antidepressants, although exercise alone isn’t enough for someone with severe depression”.**

Dr. Thisayakorn shares that he often recommends his patients to attend various exercise classes as a means of releasing tension throughout the duration of the treatment.

The Boston University School of Medicine conducted a study involving the effect of exercise on 30 men and women suffering from moderate levels of depression. The strategy was for them to walk 20 to 40 minutes three times a week for six weeks. The results demonstrated that the effect of exercise on reducing the symptoms of depression was more substantial than that of social support groups and wait-list control groups. Another study was carried out on adults suffering from depression, who were separated into two groups; one group followed a fitness programme while the other was a control group. Those who took part in the fitness programme demonstrated a significant improvement in reducing symptoms of depression and anxiety and more importantly, these results were maintained throughout a 12-month follow-up period. Finally, the Duke University Medical Centre Department of Psychiatry and Behavioural Sciences confirms that exercise is just as effective of a depression treatment as pharmacotherapy and psychotherapy.

## Conclusion

Mental health problems originate from a plethora of sources, including social, individual and environmental factors. Mental wellness issues may start any time throughout one's life and impact many people globally. Today, activists, communities, and organisations are vigorously endeavouring to bring more awareness to mental wellbeing and allow people to seek appropriate help.

Antidepressants were created in order to counter depression and anxiety produced by daily life stresses, and to this day remain the most common treatment. However, these drugs are not without risks, such as strong withdrawal symptoms and increased risk of suicide, and are therefore not an ideal relief to mental health problems.

Growing alongside the prevalence of mental awareness, alternative treatments for stress-related issues are gaining popularity. Some of these alternative treatments, such as Ayahuasca, medical marijuana, and psilocybin mushrooms, are still undergoing experiments and tests in order for scientists to understand their medical benefits and for the public to become more confident in their use. Recently, there has been significant progress with medical marijuana becoming increasingly accepted with countries legalising its use. As mental health problems used to be, and in some cases still are, stigmatised, it will be interesting to witness how these alternative treatments will evolve in the next few years. Will they, like mental wellness, become recognised and therefore implemented as official treatments, or will they be shunned?

Along with increasing awareness of mental health disorders, there is an opportunity to tap into the growing demand for mental health prevention and healing methods. While some retreats have started implementing mental wellness programmes, the opportunity lies in further defining them by targeting different aspects of mental wellness, such as depression. Strongly resembling the already existing de-stress programmes, these programmes would go one step further by delving deeper into a specific issue, thus making it more personalised and result-driven. So far, many of the retreats offering such mental health packages are luxury

resorts or basic retreats, thus making it either unaffordable to most or not inclusive of enough services. However, as mental wellness is a growing trend, the hospitality industry will soon receive a growing demand and opportunity to offer these services at a mid to upper-scale level, following the same path as wellness has done in the past.

As previously mentioned, mental health issues are forecast to cost the world USD 16 trillion by 2030. Considering our work life is among the most common source of stress (61% of working adults report some level of stress), for companies this entails employees taking more sick leave, diminishing productivity, and ultimately increasing company costs with decreasing profits. In order to avoid this, companies can organise corporate retreats, allow flexible working hours, ensure a work-life balance, supply memberships to wellness apps or nearby classes and gym studios, provide healthy snacks and in-house cooking, host workshops centred on anxiety, meditation, coping mechanisms, or organising after-work group physical activities. These programmes can either be organised by the company or by a third-party service provider.

To all those who seek to improve their mental health, the most common doctors' recommendations are the following:

- Improve diet and increase exercise
- Get a sufficient amount of sleep and rest
- Learn to take a break (e.g. go for a walk)
- Never be afraid to reach out if help is needed

Horwath HTL Health and Wellness has recently started to include mental wellness treatments into its service platform recommendations to clients, such as medical marijuana treatments for a retreat in the Caribbean or lifestyle consultations and diagnoses and chromotherapy in Europe. Through extensive research and knowledge, Horwath HTL Health and Wellness is primed for the expansion of mental wellness into the hospitality industry and excited to work on the next wellness project.



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Injecting fresh ideas and professional management into the rapidly expanding wellness hospitality sector, Ingo Schweder brings together more than 30 years of experience in the spa and hospitality industries. He leads the multidisciplinary teams at GOCO Hospitality and Horwath HTL Health and Wellness to strategize, conceptualize, design and manage the latest wellness developments for the world's top hospitality and real estate brands. From individual hotel spas to dedicated wellness resorts and master planned mixed-use developments, Ingo's experience and insights have taken over 400 projects worth more than \$1.4 billion across upwards of 42 countries from initial idea to profitable realization and on-going management.

The company manages GOCO-branded spas in Italy, Greece and the UAE, and owns the Glen Ivy Hot Springs in Southern California, the United States' oldest and highest grossing spa. GOCO Hospitality is currently developing several GOCO Retreats in strategic spots around the world. Ingo was formerly a board member of Mandarin Oriental and earlier Corporate Director of Operations for Oberoi Hotels & Resorts. Under his guidance, Ananda in the Himalayas, the globally recognized destination spa, was established.



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As the Manager of Horwath HTL Health & Wellness, Fabian directs the market research, development strategies, and feasibility studies – along with concept development – for bespoke wellness-centric hospitality and mixed-use real estate developments. Before joining Horwath HTL, Fabian worked as the Assistant Manager - Hotel Development with Orascom Hotels & Development and was involved in the development of all international luxury hotels and resorts in Oman, Montenegro, Morocco, Egypt, and Switzerland.

Prior to his engagement in the development industry, Fabian began his hospitality career with the Ritz-Carlton Hotels in China and Thailand. Having graduated with two Bachelor degrees in International Hospitality Management and Finance from Glion Institute of Higher Education and Les Roches-Gruyere University of Applied Science, Switzerland, with a Certification in Hotel Real Estate Investments & Asset Management from Cornell University, USA, and the Swiss Restaurant License, brings multidisciplinary experience as an operator, developer, and researcher to his work.



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As an Analyst at Horwath HTL Health and Wellness, Ines predominantly conducts market research analysis and feasibility studies for international wellness-centric hospitality projects. She is also involved in development and management work with GOCO Hospitality, a sister company of Horwath HTL Health and Wellness.

Prior to this, Ines held various roles within the hospitality industry, including Commis de Salle at Le Gavroche in London and Food & Beverage Cost Control for The Lo & Behold Group in Singapore. She also has internship experience at Bain & Company in Belgium. With her international exposure, Ines brings a wealth of diversified experience to the team. Ines holds a Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management from Ecole hôtelière de Lausanne, Switzerland, with a concentration on Hotel Planning and Development.

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