

Global Wellness Summit

**11th Annual Global Wellness Summit
Discerning WELLNESS Fact from Fiction in a World
of Fake News: The Media Speaks**

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Discerning WELLNESS Fact from Fiction in a World of Fake News: The Media Speaks

[START RECORDING]

MR. JARED WEINER: Okay. Welcome everybody. It is 11:03, so, again, I'm being a bad boy and getting this started a few minutes late, so if everyone could take your seats and get comfortable. This is officially, I think, the eighth and final roundtable of this format that we are hosting in this room during this summit. I, as the, I've been part, in some way, of all of those roundtable discussions, so I'm already having a little bit of separation anxiety from this room and doing this. But what's really interesting is we're going to finish off here with a session that is, in many ways, very different from a lot of the other topics we've covered so far. I think it's going to be a really, it's a very timely topic we're covering here and I think it's going to be very interesting to hear what everyone here has to say, for those of you in the audience.

Now, the title of this session is Discerning Wellness Fact from Fiction in a World of Fake News: The Media Speaks. So obviously who we have represented around the table are a lot of very influential people sitting at the intersection of media and wellness. We obviously are in a world right now, as we know, characterized by this concern about fake news. How do we differentiate what is real from what is not real? And, of course, we know that most of the attention on that is put in the political realm. We're not talking about politics here today. The idea of differentiating what is real from what is fake, or what is valid from what is invalid, this touches a lot of other areas and it obviously has application for wellness. Understanding things that actually truly are making a difference or could make a difference and how do we kind of wade through that noise and make those distinctions.

So what I'd like to do today, and, admittedly, this roundtable, you guys did have a little of a built in advantage over some of the other roundtables I moderated, because I did send you guys some questions in advance. So you guys kind of know what we're going to be covering today. So I'm not going to be able to get to all of those questions, but what I'd like to do is I'd like to get started with a

quick round of introductions. Now I've learned the lesson over the first few of these that when you ask people to do a lightning round of introductions, it is never a lightning round of introductions. So invariably people will start talking about really cool stuff that actually sort of predicts what some of my questions are going to be. So I'm actually just going to ask you all to introduce yourself, give your name, your affiliation, very quickly what you do. And I'm going to build in a little question there. And if you could answer all of the questions as kind of briefly and concisely as possible, that would be great. As you know, at some point towards the tail end of this session, we're going to try to open this up for a little audience participation and Q & A. So, again, name, affiliation, and the question I'm going to ask you is what is your editorial stance towards show me the evidence when covering wellness offerings. Is that changing at all in the current environment? Is there more or demand for evidence in coverage of wellness related topics of late? So we're kind of going to get started with questions while we do intros. I do have one very basic question before we get started, which is how do we get more men involved in wellness related media? Because I am significantly outnumbered at this table right now. But that's, I think, that's a really important question. You know, I think people want to know. What is your stance today? And has that changed in the current context over the last year or two with all of this sort of noise around what is real, what is fake. So we'll start over here with Karen.

MS. KAREN ASP: Okay. Jared, do I pick this up or do I-

MR. WEINER: [Interposing] Yeah. So you all have a mic between every two of you.

MS. ASP: Sorry.

MR. WEINER: So if you guys can just slide them-

MS. ASP: [Interposing] Okay.

MR. WEINER: --down when you're talking. Thank you very much.

MS. ASP: Okay. Thanks. Hello everybody. Good morning. My name is Karen Asp. I'm a freelance journalist. I specialize in health, fitness, nutrition, pets, and travel too. Pretty much write for all of the women's magazines, health and fitness magazines. Former contributing editor for Women's

Day. And I'm supposed to say something else about whether or not wellness evidence based. Is that it, Jared?

MR. WEINER: Yeah. So it's sort of, the way the question is worded is what's your editorial stance towards show me the evidence when covering wellness offerings? Like—

MS. ASP: [Interposing] Okay.

MR. WEINER: --how much evidence, proof, quantification, let's say, do you require when you're looking at some of these things?

MS. ASP: So anything that I put out would be just like any reputable publication. I do look for credible sources and I do look for study based information. Again, you check the source, go from there. You know, I've done, I just did two covers for Prevention Magazine and we had, I think one of the pieces had at least 40 studies that I cited that needed to be there. So definitely evidence based is key. And that has not changed for me. That has always been the case.

MR. WEINER: Thank you. And I'll add just to this, and you don't all have to answer all aspects of this, but a side question related to this is are you, as a representative of the media, feeling like you're facing more scrutiny from those who are consuming what you're putting out there to validate things more thoroughly than you have in the past? So we'll turn it over to Sandra.

MS. SANDRA BALLENTINE: Okay. I'm a little loopy because I just had a really good massage and I'm sorry if my answer is a little strange. It was a really, really, really good massage. The courts [phonetic] massage, if you haven't tried it. Anyway, I am Sandra Ballentine. I'm Editor at Large of W Magazine for Beauty and Health is my title. And I also contribute, newly, to Departures and Centurion. Before that, I was, for a long, long time, I cut my career teeth at the New York Times. So I come at it very a super reportorial background. And, obviously, with beauty and wellness, you can have more fun with it. I write in, a lot of times, first person and I put my personality in, which is either good or bad, I don't know. You let me know, if you read my things. But you have to have fun with it. But you also have to come from a place of evidence and—I feel like with a lot of these things, and also I think print differs from the internet a bit. So when I'm writing for online, I don't always have time. I mean you just have to trust me that—and I put it out

there if I haven't tried something. I'm my own guinea pig, or my assistant used to be when, for scarier things. I'm kidding. But usually I try to try everything I write about or at least, you know, torture people, other people to do it, so fake news, I don't know. I feel like, you know, you just have to take, there's a grain of salt involved with every new kombucha drink that's supposed to make you look 20 years younger. We all kind of know that and I think we acknowledge that in our writing and our online reporting. I don't know if that answered the question.

MR. WEINER: No, it does. And one of the reasons, again, I think this is an important question is just like when you think about, let's take it out just of the wellness space for a second, when you think about things are reported to have an environmental benefit. You know, we've heard for years about this term about greenwashing and the idea that, you know, people are overusing terms to describe products as sustainable or, let's say, organic when, in many cases, they're not, if you do a deeper dive. And I think one of the challenges that people who are trying to do well in this industry and all the industries represented here face is that claims are made about potential benefits to treatments or different sorts of products. And I think that there's a healthy skepticism out there as to what can be believed. And so, you know, whatever the equivalent term would be of greenwashing, the idea is, you know, in this context, you know, what is it as your journalistic responsibility and what is sort of your stance on that. So that's kind of why we're teeing this up this way. Theresa.

MS. THERESA DIMASI: Yes. Hi. I'm Theresa DiMasi. I'm the Head of Content, Editor and Chief, at Weight Watchers. And, like Sandra, I, too, am loopy, because I had a really good time last night. Just kidding.

MR. WEINER: I'm with you.

MS. DIMASI: I saw you dancing.

MR. WEINER: I'm with you. Yeah.

MS. DIMASI: Okay. So at Weight Watchers we're really evidence based. I mean everything we do, because our members count on us. We are the experts and so, you know, in my past I've worked at Condè Nast, I've worked at Epicurious, and, you know, food, fitness, and travel. All, you know, we're journalists, right? So we go to the source and make sure

that we have reputable sources. However, it's higher here at Weight Watchers, which I think is great. We have a chief science officer and we have an entire team, so we get to ask them about the latest research, in addition to other people also, but they review all of our stuff. So it's really important. Having said that, we need to have fun. You know, people want content that's maybe not, you know, 150 studies have done. We just need to present new ideas and we do it journalistically. We don't necessarily write about anything that has a health claim, because we need to not do that. But we do talk about things that maybe are still sort of on the cutting edge, but we handle it very journalistically; like here are the sides and you decide. In terms of the people that work there and how we test things, you were talking about that. So a lot of the editors, a lot of the people, actually, at Weight Watchers do Weight Watchers. So we test a lot of the products that we recommend, new fitness crazes, you know, whatever it is, nutrition, food, we do a lot of cooking. So from that standpoint, we kind of let people know that we're just like them and this is how we feel about it. And then in terms of like what you were saying-if anything has changed. I think the important thing for us is, it changes all the time. Like one day eggs are good; one day eggs are not good. And it's really, really hard for consumers, I'm guessing, it's hard for us trying to - - through that. I think the message we try to say, the words we use are really, really, really important. And I think that that's probably our biggest focus. But it's also about stepping back and looking at a pattern. Like it's okay to eat eggs, but maybe not every day. And I'm using eggs as an example. So it's really about, I'll use the example of food, it's about the pattern, it's the balance of how you're living. It's not necessarily about whether, you know, fermented food is good or fermented food is not good. It's not good or bad, it's about balance and a pattern of living your life.

MR. WEINER: Thank you.

DR. MADELYN FERNSTROM: I'm Madelyn Fernstrom and I'm here today as the NBC News Health Editor. I wear several hats, which will affect the answer I'm going to give. I'm a PhD trained neuroscientist and clinician. I'm part of the health strategy team at Comcast NBC Universal. And my life has always been evidence based. Where I think, and I'm going to stick to Jared's sort of say what you do and make a quick

statement, so we have a lot of time for discussion, is that what counts as evidence, in my view of this over the last 30 years, is there is a lot more written, digital, everything else, what counts as evidence? Evidence based used to mean New England Journal of Medicine or a famous scientist at the Mayo Clinic said something. Now it's everywhere. There are scientific journals I never even heard of. Many of these are if you pay a fee, you can get this published. So it becomes very confusing for journalists and even regular people. Anybody that writes about health or works in health, even clinicians, to be able to address this. The second is that regulation is pretty limited. We're not talking about the designation of a medical food. I mean we can't get into that whole food is medicine, it's not medicine. Sometimes, you know, food is just food. Sometimes chocolate just tastes good. So debating the evidence of all of this. You can find evidence to support or negate anything. And I think our role, not just as journalists, but as healthcare providers, of people work in the wellness field in any regard is, you know, we've heard a lot here is you're not alone. Sort of not, you know, we, not me. Ask a friend. If I am looking at something that has to do with oncology and food, for example, I'll ask an oncologist. And anyone can find a good resource, if you're not sure yourself. I think the onus on media or anybody working in health and wellness is you have to have all the answers. And I think being able to have consumers understand that evidence is relative. You can cherry pick anything and I think that, to me, is the biggest battle that we're fighting against. Because the main thing I read in the Wall Street Journal probably 25 years ago that had to do with, I can't even remember the article, is if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is. So I think we should all think about that. But, on the other hand, if it does not harm at all, if you're having traditional treatment, for example, for diabetes, if you want to take a teaspoon of cinnamon through the day and you think that's going to lower your blood sugar, regardless of the data, it's not going to harm you. If you take something that seems less traditional because you are combatting traditional medicine and don't take an oral drug or insulin or are non-compliant, I think that's a mistake. So I think integrating many other kinds of health avenues is really good. And I think the medical community rapidly is embracing a lot of these. But trying to go another direction, and especially in an area that I work a lot in is, you know, what food does do, doesn't do, what does

it do to your brain? All of these things, I think, are open for discussion, so I welcome that at the end of this.

MR. WEINER: Thank you, Madelyn.

MS. MELISSE GELULA: Hi. I'm Melisse Gelula, cofounder of wellandgood.com. I would say that Alexia and I were incredibly aware of what a fluffy beat wellness was when we started Well + Good and we were really freaking determined to add a strong layer of journalist rigor there. We saw two spectrums in journalism from the it will save your soul, it will fix your inflammation, it will cure your whatever, it will walk your dog, to the other end of the spectrum which is it can't do anything and, in fact, it's silly and like look what the silly yogis are doing and the silly juice people are doing. So, you know, the stance in the middle is journalism and we both have journalistic backgrounds, we both have health journalism backgrounds, and we felt that, you know, as things like SoulCycle were coming up and becoming a major movement, you know, fomenting a major movement in America as athleisure was becoming more important as a growing fashion category. As clean beauty was coming on the scene, or natural, organic, or nontoxic, however you're breaking that out. The validation and the inquiry that needed to happen around those categories needed to be taken seriously. I feel like sometimes those words, because they're light in our culture, you know, like millennial or influencer or SoulCycle, people feel like they don't have to pay attention to them. But they're actually changing the way that people relate to their own wellness every day. And so, you know, I always have said if the New York Times can have dining critics and theater critics, we can have wellness critics too. And so we built a team of journalists, it's far more expensive, Alexia and I did all the content ourselves till we could hire our first paid writer. And then, and it's been a very slow process. But we believe in hiring journalists, not people with opinions, not experts who will just, you know, write with a bias, although those are wonderful people to source on things. And I feel like putting that print process into a digital brand, it's higher touch, again, more expensive. But I think it makes such a difference in the space that we're in right now. And I get up every day feeling really proud of like that that's our approach to tackling it. And I do think it's ever more important as, you know, brands like Goop get the microscope on them because of, you know, their role in commerce and because it started as

someone's personal opinion on this is what I like and this is what I say works. When you expand that to a journalistic, journalistic, in their case, media brand, it gets really specious. So a lot of the people that we cover, and Abby can speak to this, our, you know, credited New York Times best sellers or the next New York Times best sellers, or experts in their field, or they're somebody who we just think is doing something really super cool and we're just telling you what the limits are, like what Madelyn was saying, you know, what their position is. But we feel like you should know about the next movement in the wellness scene. So I think, you know, for us, it's not about cheerleading those new or unproven things, that's not the way we're selling it to our readers. This is news, if you want to talk to your girlfriends about it at dinner, that's great. And if you want to try it, like here are the caveats about what we know about it. So it's been exhilarating to build a brand in media with that underpinning, journalistic underpinning, and it's like our mantra every day is the rigor, the rigor. On a really fun beat. I think all of us like love what we do and are probably really glad we don't write on finance or politics right now. Yeah.

MR. WEINER: Yeah. I hope no one in the room got offended by that, but it's true. It's definitely a different tone I see, yeah.

MS. SHERYL KRAFT: Okay. Hello. I'm Sheryl Kraft. I'm a freelance health journalist. I write for a variety of newspapers, magazines, and websites. Mostly on women's health, healthy aging, fitness, nutrition, and I'm going to take a little bit of a different spin here. I think the responsibility falls to three different categories in journalistic rigor. One is the writer. I don't put anything on the page that I don't stand behind. Personally. It's my personal integrity and my name is attached to things that people are going to read, so it better be clear and accurate. The second is the editors that I work with. It's fortunate for me that they are rigorous in checking and fact checking. Not every editor does it. I appreciate it when they do and I'm accountable because of that. In addition to being accountable to myself. But editors, I love when I work with an editor who is very rigorous and very aware of all the facts. And it's kind of a check and balance system, which really helps to get the news out that is not fake. And the third is the responsibility falls to the reader. Because I

think a lot of readers are looking for quick fixes, for easy answers, for things that are just easy to do without really putting the work in, when it comes to health. And I feel that that is not realistic. Health is a very multifaceted, complicated thing and you can't just read an article that's going to fix your life. So that is my viewpoint on the whole fake news thing. I think there's a lot of levels of responsibility there.

MR. WEINER: Thank you. And just one quick comment on what you just said, when you talk about putting the responsibility on kind of three different constituencies, one being the reader, you know, one of the issues that we're kind of facing, I think, societally right now and we've, you can cross kind of analyze this generationally, but is this idea of, you know, are certain, you know, are certain people out there lacking the critical thinking skills to truly be able to differentiate between what is real and what is not. And some people have called that kind of, you know, the Wikipedia culture.

MS. KRAFT: Yeah.

MR. WEINER: And so, you know, the interesting thing is I think you're absolutely right, that there is, the reader also has to take ownership, but the question is can they? Are they equipped to be able to take ownership? That's not just unique to the wellness space, that's, frankly, unique to any space where there's any kind of journalistic coverage—

MS. KRAFT: [Interposing] Sure.

MR. WEINER: --because now it's like the idea if you see something online, do you just take it at face value? Have you been taught to really think critically about it? So, anyway, that's a point very well taken. Tracy.

MS. TRACY MIDDLETON: Hi. I'm Tracy, oh, is this on? Okay. I'm Tracy Middleton. I'm the Health Director of Women's Health Magazine. We've always been very evidence based. I think, if anything, we have doubled down on that in the last couple of years. You know, actively debunking things. Just building on what you said, I feel like that's our responsibility now, so to give readers those tools. For example, we did an article six or eight months ago where, you know, I actually kind of wrote first person, like, okay, I'm health editor, this is what I look for when I see a study come out or I see something reported. And here are the tools

that you can also use as a reader and you can look into some of these things and, you know, to what Madelyn said of where's the evidence? You know, just kind of educating them a lot about how to vet a study that they've seen. You know, if you read something that an expert said, Google the expert. Find out what they have researched. Are they even in this field? And I think it's also our responsibility to, I don't know if it's just fake news, but it's fake news versus context. I think that there are, there's some good information that comes out, but you have to look at in the bigger sphere. So the one that comes to my mind, and Karen and I were discussing this the other day, is that last year I think there was everywhere this you don't have to floss anymore, right? Because the Health and Human Services and Department of Agriculture had dropped flossing from their healthy guidelines. Fine. Health and Human Services is a great organization. You know, they're obviously experts. Are they the experts on flossing? Are they the experts on dental health? You know, so really encouraging readers to question that if the, the evidence can be good, but is it coming from the right place? You know, really, I think that that is our growing responsibility as healthcare journalists is to help our readers to have the tools, like you said. Who else is going to equip them? It's not Wikipedia. So it's our responsibility to kind of educate them and help them figure out this very complex and very confusing landscape of health information.

MR. WEINER: And that's also a great point and the idea that, you know, in the wellness space you're effectively also serving, in a way, as a consumer advocate or engaging in consumer empowerment. So you're not just giving them information passively, but you're helping them become more active in terms of how they apply that in the marketplace. Very cool. Rina.

MS. RINA RAPHAEL: Hi there. I am a writer and health editor for Fast Company Magazine, which covers business innovation. I specifically cover health, fitness, nutrition, and wellness and biotech and how they all intersect with each other. As we are a business magazine and we cover a lot of markets, we are very much evidence based. We look for a lot of recent studies. If they're debated, and for each topic we look for more than one study, if preferable, and speak to several experts. When we look at studies, we're very careful to look at if they've been debated and by whom; if they're conducted

by a research institution or university, or if they're conducted by a company that's invested in the category. I think a lot of times several publications or blogs will just put a data dump, will just say like oh, there's this one study. Did you look at the study? Did you see the sample size? Did you see who was involved in that study? So we care a lot about that. At the same time, with a lot of my stories, we try to put out as much evidence as we can, but we don't try to sway the reader in any which way. And, you know, there's a lot of talk about experts in their field, but it's really difficult in this day in age, because you'll find a lot of people who went to the top medical schools and, at the same time, were advocating for things that are very controversial. I mean you can look at Goop's medical team, a lot of them went to top medical schools and yet, at the same time, they're advocating for products that aren't necessarily tested or have the right studies behind them. So it's not enough to just quote someone who's an expert in their field or who went to Harvard Medical School. You know, and an example of this is that I did a story this spring on the ever expanding billion dollar crystal healing market. Stores are flourishing, startups, there are now, I mean in Malibu there is one gallery where the prices start at \$100,000 and they're selling out. Silicon Valley, you know, titans are investing in crystals. And we did a whole story on that and I'm very lucky that I work for a publication that gives me weeks to work on stories, so we don't turn anything around in a day. And, you know, we have plenty of studies that say that they'll test to the placebo effect of it, there's no scientific evidence behind crystal healing. And, at the same time, you have Miranda Kerr who has her, you know, eastern advisors saying that it does help you and she's putting it in her beauty line. I'm not one to say that eastern studies or eastern information is incorrect, it's just a different point of view and I respect both of those. So I think, for me, the point is to give all that information to the reader and they ultimately decide.

MR. WEINER: And, as some of you have seen, from some of the other roundtables, one of the things I think that's been really good this year at the summit, very encouraging to see, is that there's an even more diverse audience here this year that incorporates not only folks who are in the traditional wellness space, but also folks representing, for example, the investment and financial community who are making some of the decisions in what to invest in, in the space. And there has

been occasionally some tension at the table, which is actually quite welcome, in terms of, you know, the more pragmatic approach versus the, I would say, more altruistic approach to building, you know, wellness communities and things like that. So as I sit here, I mean, and just real, a quick follow-up Rina, so you work for a business magazine.

MS. RAPHAEL: Yes.

MR. WEINER: So, you know, functionally, so do you feel that in the context of working at Fast Company that they're, you know, you have to provide additional kind of business related metrics to everything you cover in this space?

MS. RAPHAEL: Yes.

MR. WEINER: Is that something that's just kind of—

MS. RAPHAEL: [Interposing] Yes. Everything that we cover also, we have to also prove that these are companies that are moving markets, that are moving products, so, yes, everything sort of has a bottom line in that sense.

MR. WEINER: Great. Thank you.

MS. PAULA RIZZO: Hello. Hi everybody. My name is Paula Rizzo. I'm a Senior Health Producer for Fox News Channel. And I've worked there for over ten years doing health and wellness. I'm also an author, I have a book called *Listful Thinking: Using Lists to Be More Productive, Highly Successful and Less Stressed* and I do a lot of writing for Thrive Global, Entrepreneur.com, and Mind, Body, Green, about how to be less stressed out. And so the challenge, so that's, you know, on the print side. But the challenge for someone who works in video production is that, you know, there are a lot of experts out there, not just doctors, not just nurses, as it used to be in the past where those were the only experts you would go to. That was it. That was like the gospel word, right? And now there are so many experts, to our point, out there. And so it's become challenging, but also kind of nice to have more voices to be able to hear what they're saying, hear what's going on outside of just, you know, just the medical community? You're not going to meet one person here on this panel who's going to say we don't care about evidence and we don't care about studies. Of course we do. We're all journalists, that's what we care about. But what's happening is that consumers are getting their news from everywhere. So it's, again, on us to say okay, this is a trend. The crystal

thing is a trend. I wear a crystal myself. It's a total contradiction. When I get pitched crystals, I'm like oh, that's too woo-woo, we would never do that. I don't know if we would do something on that. But do I wear one? Totally. Because I think it's the placebo effect. Same thing. I feel like, you know, my appendix burst a year and a half ago, which is pretty serious, and I had my crystal on and I felt like oh, I think it protected me a little bit. And my husband was like I think you're nuts. I get it, you know? But it's just, it's interesting because there are more experts out there. There are more people now, you know, putting their spin on everything. So I think it's up to us to be able to say hey, we know that this is out there. We know this trend is happening. If you're going to go get this treatment or if you're going to go wear this crystal or if you're going to go do this or do that, here are some questions you should ask. Here's what you should be looking for. I mean we've been doing that for years for people who are getting surgery. Here's what you should ask your surgeon. Here's what you should do for this or do for that. And now there's a whole other world out there, there's just more questions. And it is on the reader, you know, or the viewer a lot of times. Another challenge for TV and for video is that sometimes the experts who, you know, wrote the study or who were the best possible person to talk to about this are not the best possible person to talk on camera about it. They're not great. And so that's another challenge. How do you get someone who knows just what they know, but can present it in a better way for camera? And it's not the same. I mean you guys don't have to deal with that when you're writing articles, and I do the same. But that's a challenge too. So being able to find somebody who is, you know, good on camera, who's able to get that message across to teach people what they need to know, that's a challenge for them, that's a challenge for us as well. But we try to be as transparent as possible to be able to say hey, you know what? This is a trend and we don't know all of the studies. Nothing is really happening with this right now, but here's what you should be asking. Here's what you should be looking for. And it's just about empowerment really.

MR. WEINER: Thank you.

MS. JENNA SCATENA: My name is Jenna Scatena and I'm a freelance journalist for a variety of national magazines and I tend to focus on travel and lifestyle. So I'm going to come at this

conversation from a little bit of a different perspective, because I don't tend to write about things pertaining to like medical advice and journalistic articles that really rely on studies and experts. I tend to, and this was actually the perfect transition from what you were just saying, because I tend to look at the wellness industry as something that is still really deep in the hypothesis phase of the scientific method. So I like to indulge in stories that is more about what we don't know and, like you said, asking the right questions. And it's okay to be transparent about the questions that we don't have the answers to yet. And so approaching a story, it's still, of course, important to have experts and to have a foundation of why are we talking about this and, you know, you have to have something to go off of that has integrity. But I think the personal experience side of things is also something that can tell a really interesting story and can bring out questions that people should be asking themselves. And so, yes, that's how I tend to approach that side of it. Yeah.

MR. WEINER: Thank you.

MS. JESSICA SMITH: Hi. I'm Jessica Smith and I work for a company in London called LS:N Global, which is a trend forecasting editorial site. And that's part of The Future Laboratory, which is a strategy company that looks at trying to future proof brands and look at ways we can kind of help them with environmental, social, and everything else in, for like, in tomorrow, if that makes sense. Sorry. But, yeah, so in my opinion, that, I've taken everyone's comments on board and I really believe that it's really about authenticity and there's a trend that we recently, I think last year, looked at which was called anti authenticity marketing. And this was looking at, at the time, how craft, heritage, those terms are really overused and like lost their meaning and it wasn't relevant anymore and almost, in a way, it becomes a parody when those terms get overused? And I think that's now the case for kind of when you talk about organic or all these different terms, they're kind of losing their meaning. So I think it's very much about how brands really market their products and they need to be a bit more like careful in the way that they do that. And then, secondly, I think that there needs to be a place that we can go to that can authenticate different claims, whether that's spiritual or scientific. Although, obviously, with holistic or spiritual kind of claims that's hard to kind of validate.

But I think it would be good if there was a place that we could use and feel confident that it's really good information.

MR. WEINER: Thank you. And, finally, Abby.

MS. ABBEY STONE: Finally.

MR. WEINER: Yeah.

MS. STONE: Oh, is this on? My name is Abbey Stone. I'm the Senior Health Editor at Well and Good. Melisse gave you kind of our mission statement and our guiding light. So I think what I can add is the more boots on the ground approach? Like I'm working with stories line by line every day. And I think something we've had a lot of conversations with our writers recently is being really rigorous. Even with the quotes that we choose that go in the article. So just because an expert or an influencer says something or makes a claim, it doesn't mean it's one that we necessarily stand behind. So we need to really make sure we're careful about the messages that we're putting out there, even if they're in quotation marks. So that's the first bit of it. Also I think that personal opinion and, is so popular in this field and some of the most popular stories on our site are the I tried it that we do? But we make sure that we pair each of those articles with expert opinion as well. So beauty editor did a story recently about drinking the doctor recommended water every day for a week to see what happened. And with every time she said, you know, my skin seemed clearer, we had quotes and studies to back that up from medical professionals that say yes, hydration will do this for your skin. So it's not just this is what I did and this is why I like it. And I think the third bit of it is always providing, as I think Rina and others were saying, like a greater context for the things that we cover as well. So maybe it's something that it's a trend we're seeing that's deeply rooted in ancient practice or traditional practice, but there aren't studies yet to back it up, we like to point out both of those things. So like this trend isn't just coming out of the blue, it's firmly based in traditional Chinese medicine or - - or something else. But there's also no clinical studies yet, so you should know that as well.

MR. WEINER: Well, thank you. And so that, again, the reason why I built a question into the introductions again because a lot of rich information came out of that and you've already

anticipated some of my other questions. I'm going to ask several questions that I'd still kind of like to cover kind of rapid fire style, I'm only going to take a few comments for each of these. Yes?

MS. RIZZO: I had to put something in context for consumers and viewers and anybody taking information that everyone has said. There's a big conflict because we assume, okay, consumers and viewers want information, but all big media companies, like Comcast, NBC, and everybody else, does a lot of research. Five hundred words, 300 words, how short can you go to get the information. You know, in video segments, is it two and a half minutes or two minutes-

FEMALE VOICE: [Interposing] Thirty seconds.

MS. RIZZO: --would be the ideal. Yeah.

MR. WEINER: Yeah.

MS. RIZZO: Well, but in terms of how can you put things in context. This is a big challenge, by giving enough information, you have articles, experts, by putting things in context where the question, as you said, are people capable of doing this? I mean look at long form journalism, it's gone, except for the Atlantic and maybe the New Yorker. So people are not willing to - - . Some are and then will go to original sources. I just had to throw that out because that's a challenge.

MR. WEINER: No. It's a very good point. And I think that, you know, all of you, as well as your peers in other sectors, are dealing with the constraints now that people are consuming smaller and smaller bits of information. Their patience or attention is not there to have, you know, to consume longer form journalism. And so the fact is how can you get credible, useful information in smaller and smaller chunks. Now, as I said, I'm going to ask several questions kind of rapid fire, just kind of take a few comments for each one. And I know I gave you guys an advanced list of questions, I'm going to call an audible and insert one here which is kind of based off of, I was thinking about it and then it's based off of what you were talking about, Paula. It's the idea that now people can get their information from a variety of different sources. We know that. So do you feel, on balance, that what you do is actually being complemented and enhanced by or it's being undermined by the rise of influencers on platforms like YouTube and other kind of, you

know, celebrities and influencers, as we call them, who are basically getting on there and saying I recommend this, I love this, you should use it, and people are listening to them? Does that ultimately help the overall ecosystem that you guys operate in? Or is it undercutting your mission as journalists? I know it's kind of like the million dollar question, but I'm sure a lot of you have opinions on that. So I'll take a couple of comments on that. Anyone want to jump in?

MS. RAPHAEL: I think it does both, you know?

MR. WEINER: Yeah.

MS. RAPHAEL: The difficulty is that, yeah, there are so many voices out there, but that's great. I mean I love that I love the fact that there are people out there who maybe don't have PhD in front of their name, or at the end of their name, or MD. But they're able to be out there and say hey, this is a really important thing that's going on. I work with a lot of experts to help them get out into the media and how do you pitch the media in an effective way? And I, you know, I think that's a public service to be able to tell people hey, this is how you should be approaching this, right? This is not just a free for all. If you're going to really be out there and take a stance and be an expert, that comes with, you know, that's a real responsibility. And so being out there. But everybody's an influencer now.

MR. WEINER: Yeah.

MS. RAPHAEL: And so that's also very, very difficult. Because people are just, you know, looking and consuming their information, all their stuff from Instagram. And from Facebook. And that's how people are getting their, to your point, in 30 seconds you feel like oh, I know that story. You didn't even read the story. You don't even know. So it's, I think it's a good thing because there should be more voices, right? It shouldn't just be the top, you know, the top ten people that you keep seeing over and over and over again. But, at the same time, that comes with responsibility that not everybody is prepared to take on.

MR. WEINER: Right. And I think, in a way, the barrier to entry, into becoming a voice in a space like this, has gotten lower and lower. I was kind of surprised personally, you know, obviously I'm a futurist and so I think I'm on top of some of these things. And when I saw a list recently of who the top

30 most influential people were among millennials, I only recognized about half the names on the list. And those were people like celebrities, you know, movie stars, athletes, things like that. The other half were people who effectively were bloggers, YouTube celebrities, streaming gamers, people who, honestly, were outside my frame of personal reference. And some of those people are those who are basically going online, for example, and effectively, at a personal level, advocating for young women, for example, to use certain cosmetic products and things like that. And so I think, and, again, I'm putting this out there for a couple of more comments, I think that it simultaneously enhances the ecosystem, because it's raising awareness about a lot of different products and sectors. On the other hand, it does, I think, definitely make your job more challenging because you can do all of this rigorous analysis and research and say something, let's say, in an article and then someone who doesn't necessarily have that kind of established credibility can go out there and all of a sudden, you know, one million-two million people are listening to what they have to say. So I think it's definitely an issue du jour. So a couple of more comments on that. Over here. Abbey and then I think, Theresa, you had one as well. Yeah.

MS. STONE: Yeah. So I think it's our responsibility to make sure we're aware of who these people are and what they're saying and then I think by paying attention to that, it shows us what the conversation is.

MR. WEINER: Yeah.

MS. STONE: So these people are very influential, that's why they're called influencers. So if we know that they're talking about something that's out there in the zeitgeist and then it's our responsibility to bring it back and show if there's any merit to it. So, for example, we did a recent story that I worked on that was essentially the truth about those laxative teas. Because every influencer, not every, but there are many that shill the tummy teas, the, all of those. And our red flags go up when we see that. But I think that's not the case for everyone. So we made sure that we did a deep dive into why would a person take these? When is it harmful? How to properly use them, if at all. So I think that's really important. And then I think we make really thoughtful decisions about the influencers we choose to partner with. So we're not just going to choose the person that has the most followers necessarily or, no, we're

not going to choose the person who has the most followers. We're going to choose the person that does have training and expertise and that we believe in what they're saying as well.

MR. WEINER: Thank you. And then Theresa.

MS. DIMASI: Yeah. What I would say to that, too, is I think having the information and the brand awareness and having people, not the brand awareness, but the issue awareness, is a good thing. Because the more that people are talking about this, it's higher up there. And so there's research that shows even with food. Like if you're on Instagram and you're following, you know, people that have these big, beautiful photos of healthy food, you'll eat healthier. You know, you hang out with people that are good, we heard it here, even at the summit. So I think that's great, it just makes our job harder, as everyone has said. But I also think that you can throw information at people and it's about how you, you have to deliver that information in the right platform, at the right time, to the right person, and it constantly changes. So they're bombarded with all these messages. But what you do, and you can't help that. You just can't help that. And so our jobs are to be rigorous, but also to figure out how to deliver that message as clearly and succinctly and in the right platform at the right time. And in our case, with Weight Watchers, it's really about behavior science as well. Because we need to deliver it to change their behavior. So we have a very specific reason. It's not just about awareness, it's about here's information that you'll need for a specific purpose.

MR. WEINER: Great. Thank you. I'd like to pivot now and actually ask a question which is based, in part, on something you mentioned before, Rina. So, you know, the title of this roundtable is obviously Discerning Wellness Fact from Fiction in a World of Fake News. Given that there is mounting medical evidence, as we've heard from many other session at this summit, for example, mounting medical evidence for many core wellness approaches, for example, exercise, yoga, healthy food, etcetera, it's striking that we live in a moment obsessed with mystical new age wellness offerings like shamans, crystal readings, and energy healing. Why do you think there is a surge in this breed of mystical, at least right now, less evidence based wellness? Do you think that these types of offerings ultimately help to enhance the wellness ecosystem? Or do they serve to undermine more science based wellness approaches? Yes.

MS. RAPHAEL: I think a lot of that is just, from the people that I've spoken to for my stories, I think that's basically a reaction to the tech induced era that we're in. I think the pendulum always swings hard the other way. People are overwhelmed by technology, they're stressed out, no one takes vacations anymore, so they're looking for alternative healing therapies. Most of these don't have any clinical studies or any research back behind them, at the same time, we, at Fast Company, try to be open minded and allow those experts in those more eastern medicines or more holistic healing practices to have their say. Because, again, a lot of times there just, again, hasn't been any studies done on these. We leave it up to the reader to make up their own decision, while, at the same time, understanding that there's a debate between those practices. But I mean I think it all comes down to, you know, the consumer's yearning for that and what is the root of that. And I think that's - - .

MR. WEINER: And do you think that that's a global phenomenon right now? Or do you think that that is somewhat market specific? Since many of us are obviously representing the United States-

MS. RAPHAEL: [Interposing] I think it's-

MR. WEINER: --is that like an American phenomenon or is that global?

MS. RAPHAEL: It's global. And I mean-

MR. WEINER: [Interposing] Yeah.

MS. RAPHAEL: --the Global Wellness Institute. I mean just their studies they've done on global wellness tourism.

MR. WEINER: Yeah.

MS. RAPHAEL: You know, why is that market double the market of other tourism sectors? It's because people are overwhelmed.

MR. WEINER: Uh huh. So it's like, it's a classic case of trend/countertrend effectively. There's something happening in the world or in the market and there's a reaction to it, which, you know, I think, in many ways, can be, it's understandable and it's expected. I see a couple of other hands. So Tracy, let me get your comment and then we'll come down here - - .

MS. MIDDLETON: Yeah. I think Rina is absolutely right and what you were saying is right. I think, coupled with that, though, we're seeing, especially among millennials, more of a distrust of traditional, institutionalized medicine. You know, they're anti big pharma, you know there are studies that show that people are more likely to trust a friend or someone they see on social media versus a physician. A lot of millennials don't even have primary care physicians anymore. So I think that there's this trend going on there. But I think that there's also a pushback, for whatever reason, that they aren't as trustful of the traditional methods that a lot of us have relied on for so long.

MR. WEINER: Uh huh. Thank you. I know a couple comments down here. Yes, Paula, and then we'll get down here. Yeah.

MS. RIZZO: Well, I think everybody loves a little magic and I think that's part of it, you know? It's sort of like nobody really understands how this works. But that's okay. You feel sort of drawn into it. It's a contradiction really, but as far as millennials go, and people who are interested in having a hand in their own healing, in any way, so maybe they've been through traditional, you know, medicine and that has failed them and so they feel like oh, you know, this is something else to try. This is something else that's out there. I think it enhances, but it's dangerous. Because you don't want to say oh, this is the best thing ever and this is going to heal you and this is going to be amazing. It might not work at all, you know? It probably doesn't. You know, it's a lot of just placebo effect. But if that, in itself, does it? Then that's okay too, you know?

MR. WEINER: Right. That's a good point. Jessica.

MS. SMITH: Yeah. I totally agree. I think that the placebo effect and those kind of different methods are really successful in just healthy people. But I think, from a futuristic perspective, I think we've seen quite a lot of things, we've seen quite a lot of tech examples, looking at digital therapeutics, which look at a way of kind of enhancing or overcoming certain issues through digital therapy. One of which was Synch Project? And that uses music to basically, it replaces highly addictive drugs with sound and tests have shown that patients manage less morphine exposed to the right sounds. So I think in terms of, yeah, those sort of measures. I think it would be, I think the woo-woo and the kind of that whole era has been going since,

I think we first talked about it in 2014 and I think it's maybe going to move on in the next year or two to more digital applications.

MR. WEINER: Thank you. I don't know if, did we have one other hand over here before, oh, we have a couple hands. Okay, so we'll take two more quick comments and then we'll move on. So Madelyn and then Theresa.

DR. FERNSTROM: A quick comment. I think part of the skewing of the core thinking is that it's not either/or. One thing that, you pointed out, it's if you have an enhanced sense of wellbeing, that's a very loose term, it's not saving money, it's not being more productive in the workplace, but it is an outcome. And if it is doing no harm and it feels better, placebo or whatever you want to call it, it's not replacing other traditional methodology. Lifestyle is hard. I mean you're in for life. And the problem is of seeing your doctor, you get these messages - you've got to eat better, you should lose some weight, you need to move a little more, you should try to relax. These aren't messages people want to hear and when you hear something ooh, I like this a lot better. It's not saying don't try it, but not to replace this for other traditional things, but to integrate it. That's why the term integrative medicine is much better than alternative. As clinical and non-clinical people say - alternative to what?

MR. WEINER: Thank you. Yeah.

MS. DIMASI: Yeah.

MR. WEINER: Theresa.

MS. DIMASI: Basically-I totally agree with that. And I think that there's this trend, especially with millennials, that everyone, they view health as holistic now? And so why not draw from other things instead of, they don't go to a regular exam, like we, you know, older generations that go once a year to get an annual. People don't do that now. They think about the day-to-day maintenance and how they could actually really affect their health from day-to-day to prevent having to do that later. And so I think, you know, if going, getting - - therapy or whatever, crystals, whatever it is, if it helps you destress and if it helps you become happier; happier people make healthier choices. So I think it's a good thing.

MR. WEINER: Yeah. And that point has come up several times during the summit, the fact that happier people make healthier choices. Thank you for that. I have heard millennials already be mentioned in conversation several times and while it's very important to study what's happening with millennials and, to some extent, the generation coming up behind them, I don't want to just be that age specific in terms of what we talk about here. So I'd like to open this up to you, Sheryl, you know, you and I had a conversation yesterday which, you know, is enlightening in so far that there is a tremendous aging population in this country, throughout much of the developed world. They're often overlooked in these conversations or, at the very least, the disservices done to them when they're all basically lumped together is 55 and over or 65 and over. There is a tremendous population out there which I think sometimes doesn't get talked about enough. So I'd like to get your perspective on how you think the more mature market is sort of interacting with media consumption in the wellness space and some of these issues that we've already raised here, how that's playing out with the over 55, over 65 set. Any perspectives on that?

MS. KRAFT: Would you mind repeating the last part of it?

MR. WEINER: Well, just sort of taking the context, we've already been talking about this, because we've talked about how it relates to millennials many times already, and talking about bringing that forward and talking about how you think some of these things we've already talked about impact the more mature market. How they're interacting with media when it comes to the wellness space. Yeah.

MS. KRAFT: I think that we are all concerned about our health, no matter who we are.

MR. WEINER: Yeah.

MS. KRAFT: I know there's a lot of studies on millennials being big consumers of health and being the driving force behind change and, you know, I'm thinking back to when I was growing up and people like Jack LaLanne and Jane Fonda and pioneers in the wellness movement. So the wellness movement is nothing new and there were plenty of people, many, many years ago, who kind of forged the way for the way it is now and were pretty innovative at bringing awareness and a lot of knowledge to the sphere. So I think we're all hungry for knowledge, no

matter if we're millennials, if we're baby boomers, if we are Gen X, Gen Y, whoever we are. We're all in it together and, to me, there's no distinction. The only distinction is perhaps our health concerns. The things that affect us at different stages of our lives. But I think that it's important for millennials and it's important for baby boomers to stay on top of the most current health information. It's, we're all human beings. It doesn't affect us differently. It may effect where we are in life and we have different ailments that are more common as we get older. I think that the younger readers and generation can perhaps pay attention to what the boomers are facing and perhaps learn from that on ways that they can live a better life to get to that point in better health.

MR. WEINER: Uh huh. Yeah. And in many ways this parallels what we talk about even in a corporate context often, which is the symbiosis between not only learning lessons or from the wisdom from those who have kind of experienced some of these things already. But the reverse is also true-the idea of kind of reverse mentorship and the idea that you can also get great information now, in many cases, I would say, from millennials who are experimenting with a lot of different products and therapies-

MS. KRAFT: [Interposing] Yes.

MR. WEINER: --and treatments. So it kind of goes both ways. But I-

MS. KRAFT: [Interposing] I absolutely agree.

MR. WEINER: --very much appreciate that. And I just wanted to make sure we didn't go through the entire conversation without considering the entire age spectrum, because it's all equally important. And I know that a lot of these conversations inherently now kind of default to talking just about millennials. Karen, I think you had a comment.

MS. ASP: So, yes, Sheryl, I completely agree. Millennials do get the focus and I think part of the guilt that we have to embrace as the media is that I do believe that we have left behind the older generation. And, by that, I'll say 65 and up. The piece that I wrote for Prevention, which was Healthiest You at Any Age, we did 40, 50, and 60 plus. My stepmother-in-law who just turned 89, again, avid reader of Women's Day and many of these other publications that didn't know that she got, and she's always saying to me when I was

contributing editor at Women's Day, Karen, there's no article in there that addresses me. Now much of the advice that I would give, exercise, move more, eat your fruits and vegetables, all the stuff that we've all heard, certainly applies to the older generation as well, but I think even just in society we've left behind the older individuals and we shun them off to the side. We don't listen to them as much as we should. And I think that's true even in the wellness space. And not just media too, so...

MR. WEINER: Thank you. Sandra.

MS. BALLENTINE: - - in a journalistic space too because a lot of articles, especially where I work, or some of the places I work are very—they give me a—they're like, you know, we want someone gorgeous and young to illustrate this or, you know, it's really hard. Yet, a lot of antiaging results could be better proven on older people. And they're—I hear, I mean my boyfriend's mother says I read that article on so and so, where should I go for so and so? And she's 74 years old. So I agree, I think we totally miss out, you know, we're not serving a huge part of the population.

MR. WEINER: Well, they definitely need to be part of the conversation, you know. And we have a concept we talk about called diamonding. Which effectively means that the longer someone lives, in theory, the more unique they become. The more life experience they accrue, the more like their own individual diamond they become. So when we think about the, not only the application of a lot of the things that we talk about at a summit like this, but the customization. The fact that every person, let's say in the 55 up and market, probably has very individualized, specific needs or wants, and we can't look at them as one kind of whole, we have to look at them as individuals. I think that's really important. So this is obviously, in some ways, a very progressive panel, because you guys are already sort of doing some introspection and understand that sometimes the conversation is a little too generationally skewed. But I will tell you it is, because I'm not a wellness industry insider, it is definitely not unique to the wellness space. This is something that I think is happening across the board. I'll take one more comment before moving on. Rina.

MS. RAPHAEL: Yeah. Just one more thing. I think a lot of times the media's coverage is just in response to what's new and what's coming out?

MR. WEINER: Right.

MS. RAPHAEL: So like I will just say that I think for a long time, like everyone has said here before, wellness has been geared towards millennials. So the new products, services, startups, have all been geared towards that. But I think that's changing just a little bit. I mean just last week, for example, Lyft is now starting a new program where senior citizens get free rides in big metropolitan areas. There's programs like Encore, which are helping, you know, senior citizens start second careers so that they're not at home basically stuck inside and not doing anything. And I think something that I know, that, for myself, whenever I interview a new company that's in the wellness space, the two questions I always ask are what are all the age levels that can join in this? Is this serving people beyond, you know, 20 year olds? And, secondly, how is this serving lower income communities? And I think that, as journalists, that's something we have to ask because I think wellness has a really big image problem. It's seen for white, affluent people who are young. And I think the more pressure we put on companies of no, this has to feed a huge spectrum of people, the better results we'll get as a community and a society.

MR. WEINER: Thank you. Yeah. Yeah. Thank you for addressing that. I think that that is kind of always the elephant in the room and the democratization of a lot of the things that you guys are covering, so responsibly, the idea of how do we make this accessible to folks who are in lower income rungs of the ladder? Folks who are in different parts of the age spectrum. I think this is an important conversation and we're just starting to have it here, but thank you very much for that. So I'm going to ask, I have time really probably for one more question and then I'd like to leave time for the audience to do a couple questions. So—bless you. With the constant avalanche, and it really is an avalanche in many ways, of new wellness offerings, whether the latest boutique fitness concept or super food or high concept wellness retreat, describe one story, pitch, or trend from anywhere across the wellness world that really got your attention in the past year. Why did it break through the noise for you? Anyone want to jump in?

MS. RIZZO: I'll jump in.

MR. WEINER: Yeah. Please use the microphone, please, thank you.

MS. RIZZO: Oh, I'm so sorry. I keep forgetting that, I'm terrible. I think the one that was, that sticks out in my mind of recent note is fascia blasters, because I had a friend over who's staying with me in my country place and I walked in on her, she was nude, and she had all these very strange looking gadgets and I really thought I walked in on a moment that was inappropriate and I was like... I was just bringing her some coffee. Anyway, I said, "What is that?" And she said, "Oh my god. Oh my god. I'm obsessed, but I can't tell you what it is." So I loved that, I said, "Well, of course you have to tell me." I mean, she, because you'll write about it and then it'll be, you know, I won't be able to buy one, the next one. So it's this thing you rub all over and she swears it got rid of her cellulite and I, you know, of course then I'm like right, sure. You know, let me, so I started trying it. And I had Ashley Black, [phonetic] the person who, you know, she worked on me and I interviewed her and I did a piece as more of a phenomenon just because it's amazing the online, the Facebook community, these women are—I mean it's like a cult and they're her disciples. It just sticks out in my mind because the rabid, the rabidness of the women, I mean not in a bad way. I mean they were so grateful to her for changing their bodies, helping their sex lives, their husbands look at them again. I mean all this stuff, that sounded sexist, but, I didn't mean it that way. But that, you know, I interviewed people like that. So, anyway, that one stuck out because critical mass it had received or achieved rather.

MR. WEINER: Thank you. Others. Yes, I see a bunch of hands. So I'm going to go to you, Tracy, first.

MS. MIDDLETON: Yeah. I loved the Impossible Burger that came out. So this is, if you don't know, it's a plant based protein hamburger that bleeds like meat, right? But what I love about it is it really kind of encompassed how holistically we're seeing health and how it impacts our lives. Because it's not just about nutrition. It's not just about, you know, somewhere that you can go and have a trendy thing or health. It's activism. It, you know, an opportunity to touch on food scarcity, you know, can this be used other places? It's animal welfare. And, you know, all these things that people are thinking about and so you look at it and it's just like, okay, well, it's the next veggie burger. But it's not. It was something that really kind of

spoke to the overall holistic wellness, I think, that people are looking for.

MR. WEINER: And holistic wellness in a context there where you're talking about how it incorporates other elements of the ecosystem. It's not just about whether or not it's safe or good for the consumer, it's about the fact that it's actually creating positive change in the broader ecosystem. I think we have to always take that into consideration.

MS. MIDDLETON: Yeah.

MR. WEINER: I saw a couple of other hands. Let me come down here to you, Abby.

MS. STONE: One story that I think really stood out to us recently was we had a staff editor pitch a story on how bio hacking relates to women and women's bodies. And she had spent a lot of time speaking with Dave Asprey for other stories who, if you're not familiar, is the founder of Bulletproof Coffee and he is, you know, finding ways to optimize his body. But women's bodies are very differently. So this became not only a story that she wrote, but also a greater conversation within our company. Melisse just hosted a panel on the topic last week. Was it just last week? Oh my god. And it had speakers that ranged from women that are using this bio hacking concepts in beauty, in spa therapies, and in like medical care as well. We had Alisa Vitti, who's invented the Flo Living App and ways to use your hormone cycle in order to hack your body. So yeah, that was a big one that stood out for me.

MR. WEINER: I'm personally very interested in what's happening with "body hacking" or, in some cases, even brain hacking, which was brought up at a previous roundtable, the idea that we can, you know, in some cases use our own natural physiology to try to create shortcuts or, you know, new processes, you know, it's fascinating. That can be a topic, frankly, of its entirely own session right there, but I appreciate that.

MS. STONE: Uh huh.

MR. WEINER: Other comments on this. Let me come to you, Karen.

MS. ASP: I was going to say, I'll build off of what Tracy said too. I think the headline that's been catching my eye the most, and this is maybe more of a trend again going toward

when we look at the three pillars of health, you might put sleep as the foundation now, but diet and exercise. On the diet front, what I have found very interesting is that we see a shift, and, again, the Impossible Burger speaks to that. Right now in Canada they are looking at redrafting their, well, they're redrafting their dietary guidelines and they are considering taking out dairy as a food group. Belgium just released their dietary guidelines and they have equated meat in the same category as candy. A lot of this is being driven again, you know, we talked about the millennials, but we do see a lot of millennials really driving the need for higher quality food for things like that. So the shift in our food eating has to happen whether you are an animal welfare advocate, whether you care about the earth, the suffering of the earth, or you care about the suffering of the people. I think it was the New York Times just did a really revealing piece that when they looked at Ghana, I think it was, and how standard American diet has come into that country. We know the story, you know the end result. American food comes in and the population gets sicker. So the shift in these dietary guidelines around the world, and, of course, it hasn't happened here yet. Started to, but not quite. That's definitely the big story I think that's going to be driving a lot in the next five to ten years too.

MR. WEINER: That's a great point and, as you were speaking, I actually made eye contact with my wife, Erica, [phonetic] over here because we kind of gave each other the eye that, you know, the idea of removing dairy as a food group or constituting meat in the same category as candy, that'll be the day when that actually happens in this country. It's interesting that's happening in other places. So let's definitely take a couple more comments. Rina.

MS. RAPHAEL: Yeah. So our magazine is obviously focused on innovation, but also how business can be sort of a force for good. And I think some of the more interesting stories that I've covered this year have really been about Silicon Valley or just startups that are really trying to address how technology can help wellness. Versus sort of what Silicon Valley is known for now, which is fasting apps. But like, for example, I've been really interested in wellness robots and these are sort of really low cost, can be available to entire communities, I mean most Americans own an iPhone, even lower income individuals, and these are basically IA propelled robots that live in your phone and check in on you

and those are the sort of things that I would love to see technology and businesses work towards. And I mean we're seeing it in different realms, you know, startups that are trying to get birth control access to more people who are afraid that they'll no longer have it. And I feel like, again, that's something that we can, as a community, put pressure on people. But those, to me, are the most interesting things that are being done in wellness of how we can really help people.

MR. WEINER: And one of the really interesting things, just to comment off of that, the use of technology, I want to bridge this to something we were just talking about, which is the aging population. The use of technology to actually help people age more gracefully or even in place in their own home. So you take, for example, these apps that are using evolving artificial intelligence or predictive algorithms and things like that with biometrics, sensors, and the evolving internet of things, which is effectively going to lead to a smarter home, the idea that you can take people who previously probably needed to be in some kind of different facility to be monitored or cared for can now, in theory, the chance will improve, that they can actually stay in their own home and age gracefully, which I think is a huge correlate to wellness and mental wellness. Because they're no longer going to feel that they are dependent on others. So the application of technology, while we haven't talked very specifically about it here, it's a great point, because I think that there are two sides to that coin; there are a lot of things that you could say technology is, and we had a mental wellness and technology roundtable that many of you attended, I think there are some things that are damaging to wellness, but there are a lot of other things that are actually really, really enhancing it. So thank you for that. I know we had a couple of other hands over here, so let me just take, actually let me take all three of you in sequence, and then we'll open it up to the audience. So we'll start with Paula and come on down.

MS. RIZZO: Okay. One of the trends that we've been noticing is cannabis. Lots and lots of pitches on cannabis. Where I've been at Fox News for over ten years and ten years ago we would have been like nope.

MR. WEINER: My wife is clapping, so.

MS. RIZZO: We would have been like nope, not covering it, not doing it, we've got to stand away. But now, I mean it's unbelievable. We've been covering it a lot more and it's just, it's changing the conversation. We've done a lot of stories, you know, children who have been helped by it kind of die all or, you know, are leaving their homes because they can't get the treatment that they need, so they're moving across the country or they're doing, you know, a lot of personal stories that really lead the conversation. But now there's so many products and there's so many things out there that, again, people are unclear about. So it opens up a whole new world for, okay, we need to step in with some doctors or with some experts to say okay, here's the real deal. It's not just, you know, the guys from high school smoking pot, you know, in a garage or something. This is a totally different conversation. And a lot of people are not totally ready to have it, but it's happening and I think the next ten years this is going to be, you know, a huge, huge trend.

MR. WEINER: Uh huh. All right. Thank you.

MS. BALLENTINE: When I saw that this was one of the questions that was going to be brought up, I was just kind of curious and typed in wellness to my inbox to see what popped up and it was like a Walmart of wellness. Like it was just like product after product after product that just inserted the word wellness in front of something.

MR. WEINER: Walmart and wellness are typically two things you don't always hear brought up in a conversation—

MS. BALLENTINE: [Interposing] Exactly.

MR. WEINER: --together, but they'd be very happy to hear that, yeah.

MS. BALLENTINE: Yeah. And it just, a light bulb sort of went for me about the connection between consumers and the wellness industry. And I think what would cut through the noise for me was really reading more about wellness as a philosophy rather than just wellness as product. And that can be told through a product, but it really has to be clear and be something that actually contributes to the dialogue of what wellness even is rather than just what can I buy that's going to improve my life.

MR. WEINER: Uh huh. Great. Thank you.

MS. SMITH: Leading on from Rina, what you were talking about technology and the kind of wellness robot, there was a recent example called Infinity House Retreats, which was a virtual reality kind of members only club that you basically access through virtual reality. And it was really interesting, because it's not just, it's basically a 360 kind of, obviously 360, but total wellness experience. So it didn't just have like the typical fitness classes and everything else you'd normally see, it also had kind of like access to nutritionists, kind of breathing techniques, meditation, a lot of prerecorded content, but then also live kind of content that you could access when putting the headpiece on. So you sort of go in and then you're kind of transported and you're in a sort of members' lounge. I kind of tried it out and it was really amazing. But it really is kind of an effective way to kind of embrace kind of technology and wellness.

MR. WEINER: Well, that was great. I'm going to open it up to questions, but I'd like to say that that—I'll take a comment from you, Melisse, actually, and then we'll open up to questions. But I just want to say that it's very interesting, there's a real spread of ideas here, so even though all of you are in a related space, the fact that you guys are covering such a wide spread of things, I haven't heard anything really be repeated among all of you. Unless Melisse is going to say something that someone already said, so the pressure's on. But—

MS. GELULA: I'll try not to be repetitious and break this great space we've created. But you bring up a really interesting point. I mean we get a lot of feedback that like wellness is so indefinable because it is so big and if you look at like our nav [phonetic] bar categories, for example, it's like good sweat and it's like yoga and fitness and like yoga and fitness alone could be its publication. And then we have, you know, good advice and good looks and good, yeah, lots of goodness. But I think I just wanted to piggyback on the, like the technology angle and the consumerism of wellness. Because both of these things I think can stand in for wellness when there's this huge movement to reconnect and to come together. I think especially since the election we've seen the formation of like women's groups as a new sort of social activity. So like women kind of coming together in political action or in wellness action, they're often kind of combined. We've been writing about this. The big quiet,

I've mentioned them in some of the other roundtables, I've just been amazed by the. I mean they're young, I mean they've really brought meditation to a younger generation and these events are held monthly right now and they're like bringing 150 people together. They start with one of the founders giving a little talk or like a special guest speaker. And these are like thought leaders of a new era. I love everyone that they bring in. We all sit together. And then there are these things called circles that we do afterward where there's like a sharing. And I'll tell you, the first couple times I went, the sharing part was really, really hard for me. I'm not like used to doing this beyond like the closest friends and family. And I think that just like proved to me the more I needed to do it and why people are doing it. They're using wellness as like a jumping off board in a lot of cases for social action and for breaking some of the boundaries of like technology, income, and demographics, geography, all of these things. And I'm really heartened by it. Am I glad that like there are more wellness products like in Target and then Walmart last week said, you know, we're going to have more clean products in here for the first time. I like hallelujah. Like yeah, I am glad because the more the bigger brands care about this, the more access there will be. But I also think that there are so many people who are intrinsically motivated to connect in a way like I haven't really seen since I was a kid in the seventies and my parents had group in the living room, so.

MR. WEINER: No. That's, and that's a great comment, I mean, to lead us into Q and A, because that is, in many ways, a very optimistic look at where things are headed in this space and so I very much appreciate that. Now I'm going to caution, we only have a few minutes, so I'm not going to be able to get to everyone whose hand is up. But I can get to more people if you guys ask targeted, quick questions. No monologues. So I'm going to start down here with you, Nicholas, [phonetic] and then we're going to hand it off to some of the folks on the other side of the room.

NICHOLAS: Thank you, Jared. I have to say that I love the fact that you're adopting, at Well and Good, the journalist approach. But I'd like to address the elephant in the room, which is the fact that most of you guys are advertiser supported and I'll tell you, as Yellow Spa, when we created the brand ten years ago, we got the good fortune of being covered by pretty much everybody from CNN to the New York

Times. And I went to war against the big pharma, because one of our mission is to teach people how to sleep in the natural way and sane way. And as we know the importance of sleep these days. And every time I was talking about Lunesta and the nasty side effect of all of these medication, it never ever made it to the final article or to the final story. So I'd like to know how we could address, as a group, the structural issue with the fact that, you know, we're supported, you guys are supported by these advertisers as well.

MR. WEINER: Thank you. Any thoughts on that?

MS. STONE: Well, I'd be so lucky to have a single pharmaceutical company care about what Well and Good is doing. I mean because so much of our content is like sleep experts outside, I feel, I mean if we're on their radar, I think we're on the like hippy list or something? You know, maybe I'm wrong about that. I think maybe, Nicholas, like it is probably a bigger media company issue. But for us, because we really always wanted to provide, you know, the complimentary approach, the alt approach, the how to do it without drugs. So many of our articles are how to do this without drugs, according to other kinds of wellness experts. And I think you're right, that is disruptive. And I think we're going to continue to see more of that. I'm hopeful of that.

MR. WEINER: Thank you. We'll take one more comment and then to the next question. Theresa.

MS. DIMASI: Yeah. I can answer that question, because we do have pharma advertisers. However, we're very rigorous about who we choose to be there. Because we don't want the same thing. And we don't have an advertiser, we don't, advertisers are not people that just sell a quick fix or, you know, don't agree with our principles. So, you know, I came from Condè Nast before, so I was a journalist and, you know, I've been there now for nine years and I was a little nervous, frankly, about going to a brand, because I thought how, you know, I don't want to compromise my journalistic integrity. And so it took a while for me to actually even accept the job, but I was promised that I wouldn't have to compromise. And I haven't. So I think it's a matter of choice. I think it's a conscious choice. I think you have to, then, keep doing it. And I think then the consumers will actually, and the readers will trust you if you continue to do that. Because even if

you only do it once, you've lost their trust and then they won't read your publication any longer.

MR. WEINER: Thank you. Let's take a question from that side of the room. Do we have a microphone? Okay. Great.

DR. KAREN COATES: Hello. My name is Karen Coates, I'm a medical doctor, MD, and I'm also the in-house expert for the Australian Women's Health Magazine on integrative medicine. And one of the things that I've noticed, certainly a trend amongst experts and certainly from the point of view of medical experts, is that they tend to, I see a trend that they're starting to take shortcuts in their evidence. And basically not read the reports that they're actually, and the research that they're actually giving to journals to support their version of the debate. And one of the things I would really like to know is within the journalistic community, is there any push towards more of a forensic analysis of the information that you're writing about that doesn't absolutely depend on the integrity of the experts that you're sourcing.

MR. WEINER: Thank you. Madelyn, would you like to jump in?

DR. FERNSTROM: You know, I can tell you, we're in a big organization at NBC News. We have a medical unit, the point you were saying are exactly right—you can have experts that will take certain data to have their point of view or negate a point of view and that's what, in the field, we call cherry picking of data. And you're going okay, how do you take this stuff and you give it to a unit. This is both for broadcast, for all the NBC News properties as well as digital, and I'm sure all of us share the same thing with different editors that we have, is there's a, either, if not a medical unit, other governing bodies who have the evidence based approach to look at the evidence. Because I think it's an unfair task for most journalists to say how can I vet this information? And when you give it to a group, and usually it's better than more than one person to be able to do this, but I think all media outlets are increasingly coming under scrutiny for this of just willy-nilly well here's the evidence or there's the evidence. And everybody, clinical people included, are sometimes taking shortcuts. So at NBC we have a medical unit, and I'm sure every other group, I know you have a great chief science officer, Gary Foster, a fabulous guy. Weight Watchers is awesome. I have nothing to do with Weight Watchers, but it is great because you do have this in place at a private company. So everyone is not a big media company

like NBC Universal, but every company has some resources to have that third party. That's a great point.

MR. WEINER: Thank you. Let's take one or two more questions. I see some more hands on that side of the room. Do we have a microphone circulating over there? Let's take another question over there. And then is anyone behind me over here? Anyone on this side? Okay. So we'll take one or two more over there.

MS. KIM MARSHALL: Hey. I'm Kim Marshall, The Marshall Plan, and I just wanted to know, I know that many people have talked about democratizing wellness and that's part of the goal of the moonshot. Do you have any tips for us as spa operators or wellness community owners? How can we democratize our offerings while still honoring the bottom line?

MR. WEINER: That's a very good question. Does anyone have any thoughts on that?

MS. RIZZO: Do you have like a quick, quick example?

MS. MARSHALL: Well, - - you get a free service-

MR. WEINER: [Interposing] Yeah, will you pass the microphone back to her? Just so we can capture the audio of this? Thank you.

MS. MARSHALL: Global Wellness Day you get free services one day a year. Not services, but classes, fitness classes and education. And all of you want at home recipes, or some people do, for doing a facial at home or what. But as you know, unless the common person can do it, it's not going to affect many people.

MS. RIZZO: Right. I agree with that.

MR. WEINER: So do we have a couple comments down here? Paula and then Rina.

MS. RIZZO: One of the things, when people pitch us, whether it be for a company or someone who has a book or has a product or whatever it is, we don't necessarily care about your product or your book, you know what I mean? And, as an author, that hurts, I know. When I was pitching my own book, I was like no one cares about this. But, you know, being a resource, so you leading the conversation as being, you know, the spa owner or spa leader, whatever it is. And whatever your opinion is on whatever's going on right now in the spa world.

That is much more interesting than the fact that you're having a special. I would never do that story. I don't know that many other people would. So I think it's just really reframing yourself as the expert.

MR. WEINER: Thank you. Rina.

MS. RAPHAEL: I really applaud that you want to democratize your product or your service and get it to more people. I would say that I feel like the internet and digital content is a really great friend in that way. I know, for example, I did a story on nutrition startups for babies. For example, how they're now, in the same way that we have Blue Apron, they're doing it now for babies, for children, because they feel like nutrition is so important and, you know, my number one question was well, great, that's really wonderful for affluent women, what about everyone else who live in food deserts? And they're like we're putting these recipes out on the internet, we're going to those communities, we're setting up stands, we're educating them. We can't give this food away for free, because we are a business. But trying to reach those communities through content, through social media, through events in their neighborhoods, I think, does a lot. I mean, again, you're all businesses, you have to make money. You can't feed the world. But I think just even the fact that you care and you want to reach those people, that's really impressive.

MR. WEINER: Yeah. And I would like to piggyback on that. I think that's great answers to that question. I think it's also a very important question. I think that that's something that's been brought up now several times during this summit. And the idea that there are people here who do want to try to figure out how to democratize a lot of what we're talking about, it's extremely, extremely important. We have time, I'm borrowing a few minutes here, I realize that, we have time for one more question because I don't think there's anything happening until 12:30. So we'll answer one last question and then I will wrap up. I've done now, in part, eight of these, so I'm going to take a little bit of liberty here. So ask your question and the we'll wrap it up.

LINDSAY SHEER BURGESS: Well, you're always the man in the room with all the women; I'm always the woman with all the men.

MR. WEINER: Right. I noticed that before. Yeah.

MS. BURGESS: So yeah, I feel you.

MR. WEINER: Yeah.

MS. BURGESS: My name is Lindsay Sheer Burgess. I edited a book called *Enlightened Real Estate* about how to rebuild the built environment for health, happiness, and enlightenment. What I have found, from pitching the book, is that it's too financial for the wellness people and it's too woo-woo for the real estate guys. So what is your suggestion in terms of pitching media, if you have what we call, like what I consider sort of a hybrid project, you know, bringing some new perspective into something, whether it's technology, real estate, finance, and bringing sort of those softer skills into something, or those more woo-wooeey, markety, whatever you want to call it, skills or, or aspects into those arenas. Because everything is so siloed. Like we do beauty or we do this or we do that, well, this is something that's a crossbreed, how do you pitch that? How do you tell people about that?

MR. WEINER: Yeah.

DR. FERNSTROM: I think you have to tailor it to the publication. I don't know if you're doing that.

MS. BURGESS: I am, yeah.

DR. FERNSTROM: There's not just one pitch. And I think it requires a lot of study of what the publication's voice is and what their style is and what their emphasis is. And distil something from your book that will resonate with the audience. I'm sure you've done that?

MS. BURGESS: Yeah.

DR. FERNSTROM: It seems obvious, but it may require a little more legwork.

MS. BURGESS: A little more tailoring.

DR. FERNSTROM: And really fine tuning it to the specific publication or website.

MR. WEINER: Thank you. Well, before I wrap up, I just want to make one quick announcement. I've been informed that due to some minor wind issues, the location of lunch has changed. So it's now going to be indoors. So after this, when you go to lunch, please go to the Venetian Ballroom. That's where lunch is going to be served. Now I just want to first thank everyone here who participated in this. This was a great

discussion. I think the only problem we had, frankly, was it would have been great if we probably had this discussion on the first day of the summit instead of the third day, but this is just the nature of the beast. I'd love for everyone in the room to join me in just again thanking everyone who's participated in this. Thank you very much. All right. Off to lunch. Thank you guys.

[END RECORDING]