

# Igniting the SPARK

“Ignite your passion and creativity; excel personally and professionally”. This was the theme and take-away message of the 2017 International Spa Association conference in Las Vegas. Report by **Deborah Mangum-Copelli**.



Sue Harmsworth, founder of ESPA, receives, “Visionary Award” from Todd Shaw, Chairman of ISPA

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS OVER the three days were appropriately selected to motivate the 2300-attendee audience to reach greater heights as Amy Cuddy, Daniel Pink and Peyton Manning took to the main stage at Mandalay Bay.

Amy Cuddy, a Harvard social psychologist and best-selling author, brought the ballroom to their feet in an arms raised V-position, one of her most recognisable and infamous “power positions”. As a highly sought-after speaker and expert on the behavioral science of power, presence and prejudice, Amy ignited a spark of authentic human capability, reminding us all that we can easily “take more space” anytime and anywhere. In her book, *Presence: Bringing Your Boldest Self to Your Biggest Challenges*, she provides tips on how to access our personal power, just like animals do when they need to protect their territory or defend themselves against a predator. If the job market is like the

open paddock, then the most present, confident, compassionate and powerful applicant will win the position.

She applies these basic principals to any situation we might find uncomfortable or anxiety provoking. By adopting a simple five-minute daily practice of “expansive powerful postures” you can practice at home or in the bathroom at your workplace, you will overcome the dread and fear you’d previously attributed to a personal or professional challenge. When we stop worrying about the impression we’re making on others and adjust the impression we’re making on ourselves, we’re living authentically, in the present moment. Amy reminds us to make our bodies as big as possible; to take more space with our arms and legs, get creative with it, and rehearse it daily.

Her scientific studies conclude that we actually feel the emotion as we physically express the emotion. It’s activating our brain and sending messages to the nervous system. By becoming more expansive and open, we’re also putting ourselves in a better mood, releasing those feel-good chemicals of serotonin and endorphins. Dr. Cuddy goes on to say, “Our bodies change our minds and our minds change our behavior; therefore our behavior changes our outcomes”. We can learn to approach our daily challenges with confidence instead of trepidation, and come away from these experiences with satisfaction instead of regret.

So, look, feel and act more powerful; “strike a pose” as Madonna so forcefully sings. Practice them in the mirror, hold those warrior positions in Yoga longer; get it into your body and brain, and you will become it.

Speaking of influential people who continue to “ignite” the international spa and wellness world, Susan Harmsworth, founder of the brand and design company, ESPA, graced the stage to receive the 2017 ISPA Visionary Award.

Daniel H. Pink, best-selling author of the book, *Drive, and to Sell is Human* powerfully delivered his keynote at the conference. His new book, *When; the Scientific Secrets of Perfect Timing* was just that – perfect timing. This non-fiction, motivational business tool will be on sale from January, 2018. Daniel’s research and experience spans work management and behavioral science; he shares that when we activate our right brain hemisphere, our creative side, we can work with “autonomy, mastery and purpose”. We will have the drive to do things because it matters to us. Not simply because of the money and status it brings; that’s nice too, but it’s not what keeps us engaged day to day.

He cited an example of the work concept known as ROWE. It’s just about getting your work done on time. Some of the world’s top multi-nationals have taken on this methodology. Within ROWE, “Results Only Work Environments”, there are no schedules, no specific office cubicles, and meetings are optional. In ROWE organisations, productivity is up, employee engagement and satisfaction is up, and attrition is down. With some lateral thinking this can work for all businesses, even those in the service sectors like salons and spas. By implementing the general philosophy of training your staff well, and giving them exceptional education, you are empowering them. Listening to your staff and giving them a platform for their ideas encourages loyalty and inclusion and it stimulates creativity.

Daniel goes on to explain the expression, “timing is everything”; we experience this on a daily basis from what we say to our client when we answer the phone, to how we address them as they leave our reception area. Just by paying attention to “timing”, we can live, work, and succeed in a more flourishing way.

“WHEN WE STOP WORRYING ABOUT THE IMPRESSION WE’RE MAKING ON OTHERS AND ADJUST THE IMPRESSION WE’RE MAKING ON OURSELVES, WE’RE LIVING AUTHENTICALLY, IN THE PRESENT MOMENT.”

Peyton Manning may not be a household name in Australia, but he sure is in the USA. As an NFL superstar and gridiron quarterback, most recently for the Denver Broncos, the newly-retired Peyton is now on the speakers’ circuit inspiring fans and groups worldwide. His message is clear and simple; it’s about winning and leadership. And that’s all relative and subjective; it’s up to each of us as an individual to interpret winning in our own way and run with it. The key, says Peyton, is in your attitude and intention. Some of Manning’s famous quotes will resonate with many of us and can be applied in our personal and professional pursuits. Here are some of his classics; you can insert yourself and your job role as you read these:

- It’s not the wanting to win that makes you a winner; it’s refusing to fail.
- Life is about choices. You ask the questions, and you listen to the answers. Then you listen to your heart.

- Pressure is something you feel when you don’t know what you’re doing.
- I’m the best Me.
- You’ve got to remember what your priorities are; what you do out there is the most important thing.
- If you work hard and you deliver, all those critics quiet themselves pretty quickly.
- I’ve never left my work saying “I could have done more to get ready” and that gives me peace of mind.
- One thing that can never be sacrificed is your preparation and your work ethic.
- It takes 20 years to build a reputation and five minutes to ruin it.

Are you feeling more motivated, taking more physical space and focusing on your timing? I hope so; these keynote speakers have honed in on what matters to them as individuals, and now they are sharing their experiences and knowledge, just as you do everyday. A blast of new ideas that stimulate energy and excitement into our day to day is a good thing. Each of these speakers can be heard on Ted talks online, and I encourage you to check them out.

With 25 Professional Development sessions held in breakout rooms around the conference venue, education was a key component of the ISPA agenda. Just to give you an overview of some of the topics covered, these top professionals in their specific fields focused on just what ISPA attendees wanted to hear. You can learn more by visiting <http://attendispa.com/education>

On day one, Merit Gest delivered a dynamic presentation on how to “Attract, Engage & Keep Top Talent”. She referred to some stats on the number of new hires in the industry and how we can capture the right candidates for our spa and salon environment. Within our businesses, we need to look at values, expectations and career paths as a platform to present to our interviewees and new hires so we can engage them and give them a future within our companies. Merit shared some very practical organisational tools we all need to have prepared prior to a new employee coming on board. “First impressions are lasting impressions”, and this rule also applies when a new staff member joins our team, so let’s be ready to teach, share, and make them feel at home.

So what about, “Managing and Marketing to Millennials”? Jim Mathis had some answers for ISPA on this. Born from 1980-1995, millennials are a demographic group often classified as enthusiastic, tech-savvy, entrepreneurial and opportunistic, but can also be unproductive and self-obsessed. Jim shared a quote from Frank

Martin, a basketball coach who works with this generational group daily. Frank says “Kids haven’t changed; we’ve changed as adults. We demand and expect less of these kids. We make their lives easier instead of preparing them for what life is truly about; we’re the ones who have changed.”

We have to amend our strategy to market to millennials by thinking more globally, as they do, give them the reasons why, because they want to know. Understand that this young demographic cares more about the cause, not the rules. And give them short-term opportunities, and flexibility, which goes along with mobility, because they are a generation on the go. Millennials are excellent networkers, so let them use their expertise at work, to work for your brand growth”.

Dawn Kaiser embraced her breakout room with “Contagious Joy; Increasing Customer Satisfaction through Positivity”. The title alone says it all; happiness and engagement at work is about our employee’s commitment and involvement. The more our staff feel they are part of something bigger, something that matters, the more productive, joyful and positive they will be. “Success does not lead to joy; joy leads to success”! And this joy and positivity spreads outwardly and attracts clients into our spas and salons and keeps them coming back for more.

“Marketing Spa Services as a Component of the Longevity Lifestyle” was the title of Heather Lee’s presentation. She stressed how to de-stress your clients by adding menu choices that serve the needs of those wanting to increase their lifespan by 10 years. Of course that means contracting the experts to deliver those services. Wellness coaches should be skilled to focus on “The Blue Zone Nine”, which involves client guidance on Movement, Purpose, Relaxation, Eating 80/20, Eating a Plant-based Diet, Wine Socially, Belief & Faith, Family-Intimacy and Community.

On Day Two, Anna Moine was only one of 10 speakers, her message very crisp and clear “The Art of Retail: Merchandising and Display Tools to Create an Engaging Retail Environment”. In a survey she conducted in March, 2017, Anna found that 73 per cent of consumers still prefer to shop in a store, where they want to try, touch and feel the product. Anna said focusing on who your client is, not what a product offers, creates the right buying environment and engages your therapists to sell. On your must-do list for your retail areas is “Create a visual impact outside and inside, DIY with recycled materials, use green living things, merchandise by colour, source from local markets, craft stores and your own home. And change your displays every four to six weeks.”

Carol Stratford and Sharon Rapoport delivered a compelling talk on “Question MARK-eting: Asking the Questions that Lead to Real Results”. As a rule, you need good brand identity, to make sure your logo and the message you are conveying, your brand personality, is in line with the product and service you are providing. It all comes back to knowing your audience, who are your most loyal clients, and why they frequent your business. Getting back to the core values of your brand is integral to long-term success. Change and a refresh are good, but only if it’s still answering the needs of your clients.

Day Three might have been a wrap of the conference, but the Education Sessions were still very fresh and new. As provided by Joy Baldrige, she



Peyton Manning compares football wins to life

Amy Cudy positions ISPA for power



came in with a winning delivery of her message “Making the Best Even Better: How to Adapt and Thrive Successfully during Change”. Always flexible and adaptable, functioning in disaster and finishing in style, was her focus. Breathe and find a way to implement your tools of vision, skills, incentive, resources, action plan and then CHANCE! You can overcome confusion, anxiety, complacency, frustration and mediocrity by just employing these few simple steps. Control the controllable and use words that matter.

Jacent Mpalyenkana graced her ISPA session “Using the Art of Persuasion to Connect with more Customers” as a way to get attendees to hone into the specifics of their individual businesses. She sights, amongst many other valuable lessons, that by using these five Persuasive Words in your presentations to clients, you will glean the most favorable and financial rewards. Use the word, *Free*, because people like what’s free; *More*, as it triggers an excitement in your prospect as to the extras they might be getting; *You*, makes clients feel like they’ve got all the attention on them; *Their Name*, everyone enjoys being addressed by their name, it’s respectful and personal; *Imagine*, this takes your client’s brain into all the realms of imaginative possibility, even investing in your services and products.

“Well-Thy Trends of 2020 and Beyond”, really resonated with ISPA 2017 attendees, as everyone wants advice about the future of our beloved industry. And so, Barbara Badolati took on the task, albeit she doesn’t personally claim the gift of psychic ability. In her engaging way, Barbara listed the Top 10 Top of Minds for 2020 being “good health, time for what’s important, good relationships, smart spending, work/life balance, job I love, pursue passions, physically fit, new experiences, and learning”. She quotes Seth Godin as saying, “A trend gains power over time, because it’s not merely part of a moment; it’s a tool, a connector that will become more valuable as other people commit to engaging in it”. A trend is not to be confused with a fad; a fad is a behavior that is intensely followed by a select population for a short period of time. And yes, a fad can also become a trend over time depending on its grasp and reach to a larger community.

Take a look, for example, at how health and wellness has now crept into everyday living. It’s commonplace to find half or more of people doing their Saturday shopping in fitness clothing. Some are purchasing nutritious meals and supplements before they go off to their Yoga class, after which they check into their local spa or salon for a facial. Look at all the apps now available to track your fitness and keep you relaxed through meditation! These wellness trends are here to stay because they are real, viable, and make sense to people who want to live longer, fuller, happier lives.

The ISPA 2018 global conference will be held 24-26 September, at the Phoenix Convention Center hosted by the Sheraton Grand, in Phoenix, Arizona, USA. You can find out more by visiting the ISPA website on: <https://experienceispa.com> ■

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