

TRANSFORM A U M

Using Nature & Architecture to Enhance Well-Being



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Being in nature, or even viewing scenes of nature, reduces anger, fear, and stress and increases pleasant feelings. Exposure to nature not only makes you feel better emotionally, it contributes to your physical wellbeing, reducing blood pressure, heart rate, muscle tension, and the production of stress hormones.

Most people have certain places that they associate with peace, relaxation, rejuvenation, restoration and/or some form of physical, mental and/or spiritual healing. Whether a family cottage, a holiday spot in the country, a spa where hot springs have achieved international repute, or even a hospital famous for disease-specific treatment, certain places are therapeutic.

Site

Because nature is so beneficial to our well-being, it only makes sense to combine it with health practices. There are ways to bring natural elements into architecture such as natural light and ventilation or the use of glass to feel connected to the outside, but by using a campus design for this wellness center, it forces the guest to venture outside when they normally wouldn't. This causes the closest relationship with nature possible since they are in direct contact with the outside elements, in either winter or summer. Although most people despise Minnesota winters, this site allows a place of serenity in even the coldest months. One of the goals of this project is to create a place of appreciation in the harshness of winter.



Located in the heart of lakes country, Lake Park, Minnesota, I am proposing the design of a Holistic Wellness Center. To be clear, this design includes a place for yoga, meditation, and relaxation. The site consists of two pools, two spas, a sauna, steam room, smoothie bar, yoga and meditation rooms, and spa therapies such as acupuncture, massage, and chiropractic services.

The practice of yoga and meditation began in the center of nature thousands of years ago, but since then has lost its focus. More people are only using yoga as a form of exercise and forgetting the main reason it was started. This design will bring nature back into holistic practices and remind people that yoga and meditation are not only available for physical fitness but enhancing the mind and spirit as well.

Incorporating nature into the design of a holistic wellness center is crucial because exposing humans to a natural environment can contribute to the goal of increasing an individual's overall well-being, by improving their mind, body, and spirit.