

FREE

W All About Women

of the High Country

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Its All About Fitness At Westglow



Photo by Mark Mitchell

Photo of Wellness Director, Marla Gentile, M.Ed.

By Melanie Davis

Westglow Resort and Spa has unveiled a new program focused on total wellness through the mind-body connection.

A new Wellness Program has been designed and implemented by Wellness Director, Marla Gentile, M.Ed. featuring seminars, workshops and activities for the body, mind and soul.

She is a certified personal trainer, as well as certified in fitness, Pilates and yoga instruction. Prior to her appointment with Westglow, Marla, also a licensed counselor in North Carolina, operated a psychotherapy practice in Florida for 25 years specializing in substance abuse and recovery issues. She also worked a great deal with grief therapy, relationships and women's issues.

Marla's expertise is now combined and available to women of the High Country through Westglow.

She explains the key is to address the person as a whole, the mind, body and spirit must all be maintained for a healthy lifestyle.

"Women take care of children and aging parents, but often fail to take care of themselves," she said. "We need to learn to relax and nurture ourselves."

The idea behind the Wellness Program came from Marla's first 18 months with Westglow. "I met women who were coming to the spa for rejuvenation from a specific, stressful time," she said.

Together with owners Bonnie and Jamie Schaefer, she

brainstormed ideas to help address all the issues facing the spa's clients and the Wellness Program was born in early 2008. The plan is comprehensive, offering seminars and workshops in stress reduction, understanding the mind/body connection, couples communication, creating balance and setting goals, self esteem, body image, self exploration, inner focus, creativity, and life enhancement.

The spiritual side of the whole body approach, Marla said, is personal to each client. The program seeks to help each person connect to his or her individual spirituality. Marla leads guided meditation focusing on mindfulness and learning to live in the moment.

"The environment of Westglow is conducive to a healthy lifestyle," Marla said, referring not only to the spa, but also the surrounding mountains.

The area has drawn Marla over the course of several years. As a senior in high school, Marla was given a brochure for Appalachian State University.

"The attraction was there, but the opportunity was not," she said about attending ASU. "But the area remained in my mind."

She purchased a vacation home on Beech Mountain several years later. "One day, I said 'Let's stay' and we did," she said.

As a friend of Jamie's, the position at Westglow felt very comfortable for Marla. She had been a personal trainer for ten years while maintaining her psychotherapy practice in Florida. The combination of talents Marla possesses and the design of the Wellness Program fit perfectly into her dream of a helping profession, a dream she recognized early in her life and began immediately through her education in psychotherapy and fitness.

"The total wellness approach has been working in my life," she said. "It is amazing to work with the whole person."

The spa environment can sometimes mean clients are at resort for only one day or one week, therefore it is Marla's goal to arm women with tools to implement on their own. For spa members, Marla is available for ongoing counseling appointments.

From the physical aspect, a customized fitness plan is designed to obtain the desired result, be it weight management or overall fitness. That plan is printed for reference after the spa experience.

The mind and spiritual tools are hands-on educational tools to help prevent acute conditions, stress reduction tools and relaxation exercises.

For more information on the Westglow Wellness Program, visit www.westglow.com or call (800) 562-0807.

Send questions/comments for Melanie to: comments@aawmag.com.