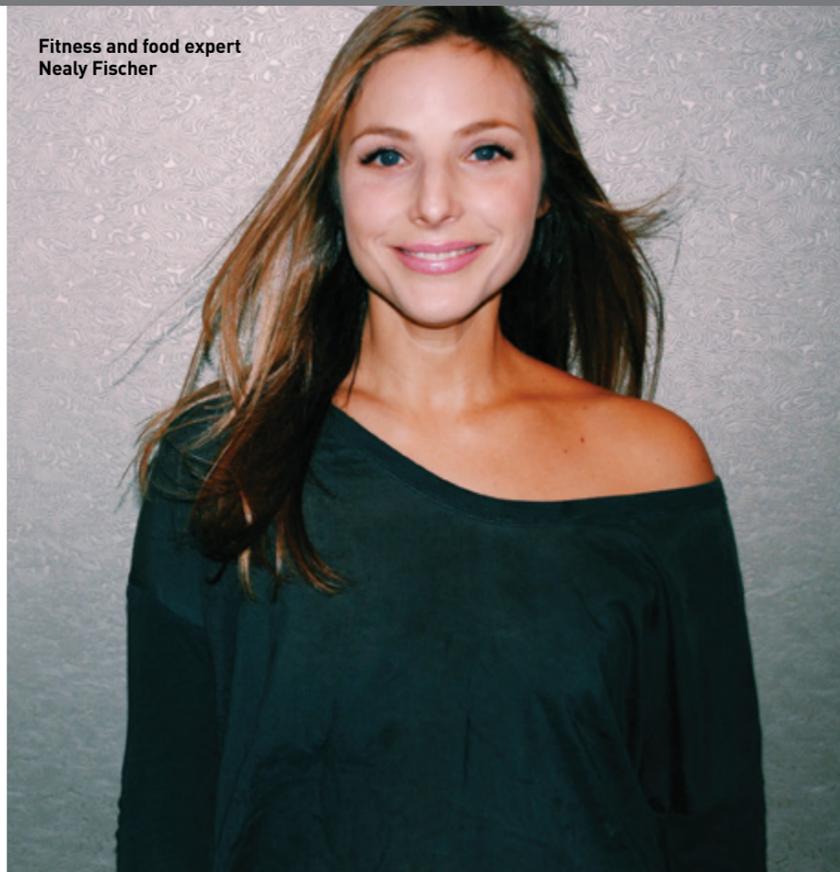


WARRIOR FOR WELLNESS

Nealy Fischer's dream of creating a platform that helps women to lead healthier and balanced lives is coming true with the launch of Mayya Movement, a wellness concept that will also raise funds for the Karen Leung Foundation.

Fitness and food expert
Nealy Fischer



Nealy Fischer's Mayya Movement is geared to women and wellness

“I WANT WOMEN TO BECOME EMPOWERED ABOUT SELF-CARE RATHER THAN THINKING OF IT AS A SELFISH INDULGENCE.”

Determined, passionate and well-versed in the world of health and fitness, Nealy Fischer has finally found a way to integrate her passions into one and assist women in making the right choices for their overall wellness. Mayya Movement (www.mayyamovement.com) will launch next month with an event at the W Hong Kong. To say Fischer is excited would be an understatement; she flashes a wide grin as she divulges what to expect: “It will be a 360-degree experience for everyone, giving tips on the food you eat, how you sleep, inspirational talks to give you ideas and tools that you can take away to transform whatever area of your life you need.” Mayya Movement will donate all profits from events to the Karen Leung Foundation, a local organisation that raises awareness of gynaecological cancer.

An American, Fischer has worked in the wellness industry for 18 years, the last 10 of them based in Hong Kong. She has travelled the world to teach classes and lead luxury retreats at the likes of Six Senses and The Farm. A former teacher at Pure, she regularly hosts private cooking

and yoga events for women at her home.

Until recently the mother of four found it difficult to think beyond her family. “When you are planning to have more children, it is hard to be able to think long term and plan big things that will take up all your time,” she explains. “Now I’ve had my four amazing children and I’m ready to follow my dream.”

BACCARAT: What is Mayya Movement?

NEALY FISCHER: I wanted to create a platform for women to have access to comprehensive wellness solutions. There are so many options and methods; I didn’t want to create a new method but to bridge all the elements together. We took a curated approach by hand-selecting various different prongs we can tap into as women. We hope to inspire women about their potential so that they can live healthy, mindful and blissful lives.

How will Mayya Movement accomplish this?

Through community based events, product partnerships, social media campaigns,

events and online resources. We intend to hold regular events that bring in celebrities and professionals from overseas, but to also work with local initiatives so we can send people to places in town that help them.

Who are you bringing in for the launch?

We have a group of amazing women coming in for our first event. Our keynote speaker is Dr Mark Hyman, a functional medicine doctor and acclaimed author of bestsellers on health and wellness, will give us tips on how to take care of ourselves inside and out. He addresses disease by looking at the root case rather than bandaid-ing a symptom, which is crucial in Hong Kong where there is very little preventative healthcare. We need to begin looking at preventing disease rather than just treating it.

Do you feel women in Hong Kong make health a priority?

We face a lot more challenges here, from the stress, pollution and fast paced lifestyle to the need to be seen. We strive for a huge work-life balance every day, so it is

hard to find time to do something simple like exercise for an hour and a half. I hope Mayya Movement will enable more women do more for their health.

Why work with women specifically?

Women in the realm of fitness and yoga require specific targeted advice that is different from men. Our systems work differently than men – we give birth, we have vanity and self-conscious issues that get in the way of competing in the same realm as men, and we have different nutritional needs. I want women to become empowered about self-care rather than thinking of it as a selfish indulgence.

Why did you want to work with a charity?

I believe women are the pillar of our microcosmic universe – in one way or other we take care of somebody or something, creating a ripple effect, so if you take better care of yourself, you will then take more care of others. I am not looking to build a fancy brand that rakes in money. While that can be important to some, my bigger motivation is to make a difference in my little world. I feel if I give women the tools necessary to take care of themselves – by coming to

our events and engaging in our products – they are doing something meaningful not just for themselves, but for others.

Why did you choose the Karen Leung Foundation?

I want to align with charities that are doing positive work linked to women’s health and wellness. I knew Karen personally, and before she passed away from cervical cancer it was her wish to help women understand their options and get tested early to prevent what she went through. Many women’s gynaecological cancers and diseases are preventable if caught early, and we hope to encourage women to get regular checks and also to introduce them to the top experts from around the world and locally. All of our proceeds will go towards the foundation.

What motivates you?

As women we tend to view ourselves through the lens of a ‘mini-me’, the person who couldn’t possibly achieve all those big things. Many of us don’t dream as big as they could, but I have a friend who always encourages me to do so. Who says I can’t? Anything is possible when you have a passion. **15**

ABOUT THE KAREN LEUNG FOUNDATION

The Karen Leung Foundation was founded in memory of Karen Leung, who died of cervical cancer at the age of 35. Leung wished to raise awareness about preventative measures and resources for gynaecological cancer. The Karen Leung Foundation educates women about cancers that start in the female reproductive system, including ovarian, cervical and vaginal cancer, promoting prevention and early detection and providing access to top quality medical care. See www.karenleungmemorial.org.



Karen Leung