



Photo by Mark Justesen

After 20 years as a corporate executive, Bernie Rosen (left, talks with a client) decided to dump the suit and start his own nutrition and diet consultation business.

A healthy change

Mequon man trades in white collar job for a career in nutrition

By Laurie Arendt
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Cedarburg -- Not too long ago, Bernie Rosen was living the typical corporate lifestyle. As a marketing and strategic planning executive with a two-decade long career, Rosen traveled a lot, ate on the run, and clocked in about 60 to 70 hours of work each week.

"I was 185 pounds ... on a five-foot, six-inch frame," Rosen said, who decided to change his lifestyle after getting tired of having to buy new clothes to correspond with his ballooning weight. "I realized I wanted to be healthier, which meant eating better and finding ways to exercise more."

He also thought of his uncle, the proverbial Black Sheep of the family, who took off to California and had a penchant for taking vitamins and supplements.

"I had talked to him about the fact that I didn't think my night vision was as good as it used to be," he remembered. "I noticed it when I would drive at night, and he suggested trying bilberry, which was used by British fighter pilots during World War II."

He took it, and almost immediately started to feel - and see - a difference.

Rosen began implementing other healthy changes in his life.

"I gave up the fatty foods -- the french fries, the chips -- and that takes awhile," he said. "Over time, I eliminated quite a bit of that food."

He also tried a yoga class with his wife.

"It was actually very accessible and I liked it," he said.

All of these lifestyle changes started to have an effect on his lifestyle. He lost 40

pounds, and his seasonal asthma went away. A lot of little things started to add up, and Rosen started to feel healthier than he'd been in a long time.

Then other things in his life started changing. In 2000, Rosen started teaching a yoga class at work. It was a bit of a switch, to say the least, for an executive with an economics degree from the Wharton School of Business and a master's from the J.L. Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern.

"I had reached a point where I wanted to help people, and share what I'd learned," he said. "Perhaps that was part of my marketing background."

He also came to the realization that what he was doing at work wasn't really resonating with him anymore. Instead of working to convince people to buy or use certain products and services, he wanted to teach them how to help themselves become healthier.

When a downsizing left Rosen without that corporate job, he saw it as an opportunity.

"It really was kind of a blessing," he said. "I was tired of the corporate world, and it gave me the opportunity to finish up my coursework faster than when I was working."

Rosen earned a Doctor of Philosophy in Holistic Nutrition from the Clayton College of Natural Health. In addition to being a certified Kriplau Yoga Teacher and an initiated student of Yohiraj Rod Stryker in the Sri Vidya tradition, he's also a Registered Yoga Teacher through Yoga Alliance.

He's also been trained in Ayurvedic education through The American Institute of Vedic Studies.

In March 2007, he established Rosen Well-

ness in Cedarburg. Rosen's intent is to provide nutrition education and consultation for individuals, groups and businesses.

"I'm particularly interested in helping men become healthier," Rosen said. "Men have a tendency to have a heart attack first, and then figure out what to do about it."

He's also interested in educating people about nutrition and stress. Rosen believes healthier food choices, combined with permanent lifestyle changes, can help our bodies better respond to that environment.

"A lot of nutritionists just talk about food, and miss the stress aspect," Rosen said. "But we live in a society where we're in a chronic stress response, and our bodies manufacture hormones to deal with that stress."

Rosen Wellness offers both group and individual yoga instruction to clients in the traditional Hatha tradition.

"It's actually Tantra yoga, and it focuses on calming the mind," he said. "It's more about 'internal sweat' and yet, at the same time, breathing and relaxation."

Rosen is kicking off new programming this February to help people make positive lifestyle changes in 2008.

"They are 12-week healthy lifestyle programs," said Rosen, noting the programs will be held in Grafton, Cedarburg and Mequon. "It's designed to educate people on how they can change their lives for the better."

As he ends his first year in helping people live better lives, Rosen offers a simple message to drive his mission home.

"You don't have to feel bad, you really don't," he said. "You can make changes to be healthier, and you'll feel better, too."

For more information on Rosen Wellness, call Rosen at 389-9907.