

# LIVE THE PROCESS



*"Focus on  
quality instead  
of quantity"*

## **A Moment With Eric Villency**

Live The Process

**Eric Villency is all about evolution.**

The CEO of Villency Design Group, nicknamed “The Wellness Wizard” by industry insiders, has grown his family’s consumer product development firm by leaps and bounds, while staying true to a core ethos: establishing merchandise and brand identities for wellness-focused clients—including Soul Cycle, Pure Yoga and Organic Avenue—that set them on course to becoming household names.

His personal outlook on health and wellbeing changes as he matures, and he has learned to soften his approach to fitness to prevent pain and shift his attitude when he encounters life’s inevitable challenges.

Here, Villency explains why he is passionate about helping wellness brands succeed through design, while maintaining a balanced perspective in the face of imperfection:

**Live The Process: Have you always been interested in leading a health-conscious lifestyle? What does your personal routine look like?**

Eric Villency: My father is a fitness fanatic, so I was exposed to the lifestyle at an early age. My own views have evolved greatly over the years. I used to have really flawed ideas when it came to exercise: I thought that if I wasn’t suffering, I wasn’t really getting results—limping the next day was a sign of achievement. As a consequence, I ignored a lot of nagging injuries that became chronic because I didn’t allow myself time to heal.

The pain eventually forced me to explore alternative philosophies. A typical routine for me is a mix of high-intensity training a few times a week with strength and flexibility days, where injury avoidance is a primary goal. Mentally, I tend to be very hard on myself, so I do my best to focus on quality instead of quantity, meaning I focus on executing my practices well instead of being overly obsessed with counting reps and keeping track of my pace. I don’t have to worry about mental stagnation because every new health and wellness professional project I work on tends to not only be a design challenge, but also a physical test, since the only way to really understand a brand is to experience it. From burpees and interval training to Pilates, box jumps and spin class, many client meetings take place in shorts and a tank top with someone barking commands at me. And I love every moment of it.

**LTP: You’ve been nicknamed, “The Wellness Wizard.” How did you decide to work in wellness?**

EV: Perspective authors are always told, “write what you know,” and since two of my great passions in life are design and wellness, it was a natural progression to have them come together. One of the first big projects I did that allowed me to work in the sector was to design a boutique development anchored around wellness clients. I saw firsthand how those brands have thrived, even as other businesses have struggled. It’s been a fun ride the last few years, working with clients

who have grown from inhabiting a few locations to become national brands.

**LTP: Is there a common obstacle that fitness and wellness companies face when trying to build their brands?**

EV: Consumers are educated, passionate and demanding, so meeting their expectations while managing growth is very difficult. Successful companies have a unique vision and create an immersive experience that fosters and then engages a client of devoted followers. I think the brands we work with appreciate our design sensibility and skill in creating high-quality products and merchandise that is made just for them. Having innovative products exclusively helps companies build and enhance brand perception, generate revenue and create a significant competitive advantage. It's exciting working in fitness and wellness because the community members know exactly what they want and how they want it made, and, as a designer, it's inspiring to feed off of that passion.

**LTP: What advice would you offer someone who has a new product or practice concept, but is unsure of how to bring it to fruition?**

EV: While it is extremely challenging to break through the clutter of the marketplace, at the same time, technology has made the world a very small place. Believe in yourself and try to expose your idea to influencers who can help get the word out. Social media and industry blogs are a good place to start. The wellness community is tight-knit and converting the right believers can help spread the word virally. Good luck!

**LTP: What does happiness look like to you?**

EV: Life's simple pleasures: making turns down a mountain in fresh powder, swimming in the open water, long walks on the beach, laying in a hammock staring up at the stars and, most importantly, getting to share those moments with my loved ones.

**LTP: What does it mean to you to "Live The Process" and how do you do that every day?**

EV: My work as a designer is a constant source of life lessons. I love conceptual art and Wabi-Sabi that explores the ideas of imperfection and impermanence. How do you measure success? Some of the work I am most proud of in my career never achieved huge commercial sales. Living life with passion and dedication makes the process. It's cliché but "failures" and imperfections are part of life. I have found the challenge lies in not reacting with discouragement to those inevitable disappointments. I hold myself to high standards and try to devote myself entirely to my practices, both personally and professionally. The trick is to be able to maintain perspective and balance. I work on that every day with the hopes that maybe sometime, I'll actually get the hang of it.