



4 KEYS TO GOOD HEALTH FOR WORKING WOMEN

With more and more women joining the labor force, women these days have made significant progress in obtaining recognition at work. According to a recent study conducted by the International Labor Organization (ILO), the Philippines is among the highest in Southeast Asia in terms of acceptance rate for working women at 88%.

But the truth of the matter is that, working women are faced with more challenges than working men at the workplace. According to Silayan Kintanar of the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW), working women render 6.4 hours of unpaid care work compared to the average 2.3 hours a day rendered by their male counterparts.

"Women cannot be empowered in the economic area because of unpaid care work (UCW) that typically averages to at least 6.4 hours a day," Kintanar said during her recent visit to the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) - Central Office.

UCW are services usually rendered by anyone to his or her family member or loved ones at home, in the hospital or even by bringing your child, nieces or nephews to school.

With the plethora of responsibilities that working women fulfill for their loved ones, two women in DILG Central Office shared four keys to achieve good health. These include exercise for physical strength, food for nutritional support, sleep for rest and relaxation, and the right emotions for a good mental state. These four keys generally make any active working or domestic women physically, mentally, and emotionally healthy.



Baby Sta. Ana's family

Sixty-six-year-old Baby Sta. Ana of the Office of the Secretary (OSEC), who has devoted 43 years in the Department, attributes her work-life balance to her positive outlook.

"Kapag magaan ang pagiisip mo, less ang stress at madaling ma-neutralize ang negativity," she said.

Sta. Ana has served nine DILG Secretaries, 15 Directors, one Undersecretary, and one Assistant Secretary, and has agreed to extend her working years in the Department. She admits that although she sees things positively, it will not be sufficient to keep her body healthy. So, whether she is at home or in the office she always keeps her body in motion.

"Palagi akong sayaw ng sayaw kahit anong ginagawa ko. Maging sa pagluluto, o kapag naglilinis, ginagalaw ko lahat ng parte ng katawan ko. Maging ang mata ko at mukha ini-exercise ko rin," she explained.

Sta. Ana also revealed that she gives in to the temptation of eating protein such as pork and meat at a very minimal level. She indulges into eating more vegetables and fish as these foods are healthier.

In her senior years, Sta. Ana is already hypertensive so to manage stress, she only thinks of life issues and concerns that are within her control and lifts other things to God.



Leah Centeno's family

Meanwhile, Leah Flor Centeno of the Public Affairs and Communication Service (PACS) keeps her sense of balance through constant communication, equal distribution of time in taking care of her loved ones and her husband's family, and regular exercise.

Centeno shares that while she works from Monday to Friday, she sees to it that she has gone through the needs of her only child Lenlen before going to bed at night or before preparing her personal needs. An early riser, Leah goes to bed early for her to have sufficient time to relax her mind and prepare her body for the following day's responsibilities.

"I always have time for her [Lenlen] especially on weekends at pag-uwi ng bahay from work. Pinapa-kurwento ko siya kung ano iyong naganap sa school, o kumusta ang pag-aaral niya. Hinahayaan ko lang siyang mag-open up, kung naglalaro siya o anong ginagawa niya," she said.

Since her husband's work requires him to travel out of the country for a few months a year, Leah does more as a better-half and as a mom whenever her husband is overseas every two to three months.

Despite the demands of her responsibility as a career woman, mother, and wife, Leah sees to it that she has time for herself. She takes a 30-minute exercise on their stationary bike at home during weekdays and even longer during on weekends.

Leah's message to her fellow mothers this Women's Month is *"to maintain and ensure that we distribute our time equally to all our responsibilities that we have willingly accepted, para may time tayo sa lahat ng magpapasaya sa atin."*

So hurrah to all working women who take double time in keeping up with their responsibilities at work and in their homes.

As Facebook COO Sheryl Sandberg puts it: *"We need more portrayals of women as competent professionals and happy mothers or even happy professionals and competent mothers."* ■

By: Sam Mediavilla

DILG SHARED VISION

A strongly determined and highly trusted Department committed to capacitate and nurture local government units, public order, and safety institutions to sustain peaceful, progressive and resilient communities where people live happily.