

Edna Caballero

Hidalgo County Wellness Program Champion of the Month

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“You don’t have to give up the things you enjoy, [have] everything in moderation. A small change can make a difference.”

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Edna Caballero, Accounts Payable Specialist II, Precinct 4

Several of us usually have our health on the back burner or never have it on our minds at all. It really doesn’t come to our realization until a life event or moment happens. For Edna Caballero, it was in 2017 when she saw a Christmas group photo.

“I couldn’t see it on myself or I’d look in the mirror and just didn’t see it. And just looked at the picture and thought, ‘Oh my god, is that what I look like?’” stated Caballero.

In 2017, Caballero started working for Hidalgo County Precinct 4. At the time, she says her routine was going to work, going home, and doing nothing; along with a lot of unhealthy eating.

“I wasn’t focusing on my health or my future,” explained Caballero. “I was just living life. I didn’t care. Just taking one day at a time and not even focusing on the future.”

However now she does care. Caballero mentioned she will be turning 40 this year and it’s a big deal for her.

“My dad was 40 when he passed away,” she said. “He died of a heart attack and that is one of the main reasons why I made the change to be and stay healthy.”

With that decision, Caballero’s new health journey started on New Years’ Day 2018. From January to September, she worked on her diet and lost around 50 pounds.



“I’ll be turning 40 this year and I wanted to make sure that I made a change in my lifestyle to be a healthier me,” she said.

She expressed her love for junk food, “I love chips. I love candy. I can eat it every day. If you put it in front of me, I will eat it. I have no self-control.”

Caballero figured the best solution to cut out the junk food was to not buy it at all.

“I’ll be at home and say ‘Ugh, I really want candy!’ ‘Why didn’t you buy candy when you were at the store?’ No, I’m helping myself,” she gushed.

She admits she still eats sweets from time to time, but only after avoiding them for a month or two. Chips and candy are now more of a reward for challenging herself after resisting temptation for a certain amount of time.

Within that time of starting her new lifestyle, Caballero discovered the Hidalgo County Wellness Program.

The Wellness Program had announced a challenge for county employees to participate in. Participants were awarded based on who lost the most body-fat percentage within a certain amount of time. Caballero was one of the winners in the challenge; losing around 5% body fat.

“I lost about 5% of my body weight even though I had a knee injury and was unable to do any type of workout. So everything was just healthy eating and that’s how I lost, I think, 14 pounds [for the challenge],” she said.

Each year, Caballero gradually added to her routines and goals. Along with her initial change in diet, she started by walking four miles every day. Then at the end of 2020, she joined a gym.



“I would go about three or four days a week,” she revealed. “Then this year – Monday through Friday – I get to the gym at 4:45 in the morning. I work out. I do weights. I do cardio. I run two miles on the treadmill every day, then one mile after work. I try to run three miles every day.”

In addition to frequently going to the gym in 2022, she and her sister came up with a new goal.

“In December, she sent me a text. She said, ‘You know what? My new year resolution for 2022 is going to be to do a 5K every month,’” said Caballero. “I said, ‘Ok. I’m going to join you!’ So we’ve been doing that.

We started in December and I think I’ve done four or five 5Ks up to now.” According to Caballero, some of her coworkers have also taken charge to improve their health and also act as support for her at runs to cheer her on.

“At the David Chavana run. A couple of my coworkers showed up and it was freezing that day! They had signs saying ‘Run Edna Run’ and ‘Hurry up! We’re freezing!’” Caballero laughed. “It was really nice that they showed up with signs.”

Caballero has seen a change in her colleagues’ habits. She said she and another coworker try to encourage everyone in the office to go on walks around the building during their breaks. They even try to meet up on the weekends.



“We’ve gone to different parks to walk. We’ve gone to Sal del Rey to go walk and come back. Just to get moving,” she said. Caballero says being outdoors and more active has improved her mental health.

In addition to that, she mentioned the Wellness Program webinars have been helpful. “The ones that have to do with stress. A lot of those,” she snickered.

“There’s always someone in the office playing one out loud. Even though I don’t have it on [my computer], somebody has it on. It’s there. You’re listening.”

She noted her supervisors are very encouraging to go for a walk on their breaks. They will join the rest of the staff on the walks.

Caballero credits her mother for also motivating her. At the age of 72, her mom walks three miles every day.

“I want to be like her. I don’t want to not do anything then get to that age and not be able to move,” she explained. “She’s trying to be fit just for her health, but also she doesn’t want to be at home then not doing anything and not be able to do anything for herself.”

Caballero added she does not have children but has young nieces she wants to see grow up.

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