

ALEXIS BONILLA

Wellness Champion of the Month



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Alexis Bonilla starts her day with what she calls “a miracle morning routine.” She wakes up at 5 A.M., giving her some time for herself before work. She credits “The Miracle Morning” by Hal Elrod for giving her the idea.

According to her, one of the biggest excuses she had that put her health on the back burner was time. Being a wife and with three children to raise, Bonilla knew she had to manage her time better to take care of herself.

Bonilla says she was at her heaviest at around 190 pounds. She is now at 133 pounds. In that time before work in the morning, she exercises.

“I go into work at 8 [A.M.], and I make it non-negotiable that I have to spend at least one hour a day with myself just doing the things I know will help me. Physical. Mentally. Just making that one hour for yourself is super important. Even if you're busy and you're doing a lot of things. You have to make time for your health,” said Bonilla.

Bonilla first heard about the Hidalgo County Wellness Program at a presentation at the courthouse auditorium about two years ago. The program presented the resources accessible to county employees.

“I like that the county did that because it emphasized how it's important to take care of our health, even though we work a full-time job,” she said.

It was nice that Hidalgo County was providing its employees access to the Precinct 2 Indoor Sports Complex at no cost, according to Bonilla. She says she appreciates the webinars the Wellness Program also provides that put a spotlight on mental health.

“For me, I've suffered from anxiety before in the past. It goes hand-in-hand with your wellness, your nutrition, all those things. For me, it helped me control my anxiety,” explained Bonilla. “Every single week you're getting these messages [from the webinars], like, ‘Don't forget, take care of your mental health.’ It's nice to have that reminder that your mental health is important. Your job is important, so is your mental health ... That's really good. Last year, everything was about health. We take our health for granted so many times, we don't take care of ourselves sometimes.”

Making the change in her lifestyle was also instilled in her family. Bonilla says her husband has also picked up the miracle morning routine.

She encourages her children to move for about 20 to 30 minutes to be active and to eat healthy by eating more fruit and vegetables.

“I want them to feel good about themselves. I want them to have that energy and understand that it’s more than just being a size on the scale or looking a certain way. It’s how you feel about your body and having that energy to tackle your day and to do the daily activities that you need to do,” Bonilla said.

At the office, she tries to encourage her coworkers to at least eat healthier, move often, and drink more water throughout the day to stay hydrated.

When she’s offered the occasional sweet treat at work, she usually turns them down, but says, “What I like to tell my colleagues or my coworkers, ‘I like to save my treats for special occasions.’ You can have the treats. I see nothing wrong with having treats. But I know that at 3:30 [p.m.] is when we have that crash of energy. You know because you’ve worked all day and you’re tired. I always try not to eat sweets on my break, because it makes it worse. So you want to eat a fruit or bring jicama, or something else to help you. So you don’t get that sugar crash. They look at me funny, but it works!”

Bonilla hopes county employees make an effort to improve their health. She noted that she is proof that it can happen.

“No one is going to do it for me. Nobody is going to come to save me. I have to do it for myself. I have to make time for my health. Even though we have a busy life, we still have to make our health a priority. And it’s amazing the county is focusing on that. I love that they’re focusing on that because so many times we forget about our health,” she said. “We put it on the back burner. We think we’re always going to be healthy. And last year we learned that our health is our wealth, that’s everything. If we don’t have our health, we don’t have anything.”

All in all, it’s been more than a miracle for Bonilla that she improved her health in body and mind. She added her true reason why she made the change to have more energy, live happier and healthier – was her children.

