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BRIGHTER INSIGHTS BY SUN LIFE MALAYSIA

HOLISTIC BODY, MIND AND SOUL

WHEN I was asked what I have in mind for my first column — focusing on sharing brighter insights to the readers — my immediate thought was on the topic closest to my heart: Family.

My family is the epicentre of my life and gives me a strong sense of purpose. There is nothing I would not do to protect them and give them the very best.

The same can be said for my responsibility as chief executive officer and country head of Sun Life Malaysia, a life insurance and family takaful provider. The concept of family is deeply ingrained, from the protection plans we offer as lifetime financial security to our clients and to the more than 600 employees I consider my extended family.

FAMILY FIRST

We all want the best for our family. To achieve that, we work hard to ensure we can give them the gifts of protection, security, and health. Unfortunately, many Malaysians face challenges placing their families first due to reasons that are not entirely within their control.

Financial obligation is a com-

mon concern and that's why work often takes precedence over everything else in our lives. Some work long hours or multiple jobs. Some travel early to work or come home late to avoid traffic. When you are finally home, either it is late or screen time takes away whatever little time you have with your family. Yet, all of these are necessary to keep the bills paid and put food on the table.

But, food and utilities alone don't make for a happy home. What about the precious family time that helps build emotional bond and confidence in our children? All these disenchantments might seem like minor things, but can pile up to eventually cause stress and unhappiness in yourself and impact your family life.

A HEALTHY BODY, MIND AND SOUL

Not everyone can choose to run away from not having to work. We work because we have to make a living, put food on the table and cater to our preferred lifestyle. Therefore, to avoid falling into a deep, dark hole of stress and unhappiness, we need to find a way to balance our physical, emotional, and mental health.

I don't have miracle cures but I want to share a simple philosophy that allows you to make a conscious decision to ensure that the health of your body, mind and soul contributes to a secure, meaningful and healthier life.

Feeding the body goes beyond just eating sufficiently to avoid malnutrition. It involves watching what one eats and how we take care of our body. Despite my busy schedule, I make the effort to eat healthy and cook healthy meals for my wife, children and parents. I also find the time to exercise together as even a simple walk around the neighbourhood can be a great bonding session.

Nourishing our minds is through constant learning, reading and listening. Learn to observe your surroundings better — when we pay more attention to what is happening around us, it helps to improve focus, memory and analytical skills.

Also, look to surround yourself with positive people so that you get to absorb the good influence. These "nourishments" help to feed the mind and add significant value to your relationship with your family.

Lastly, in the midst of all our work obligations, our own emo-

tions may be neglected. Take some downtime for emotional nurturing by setting aside personal time for activities that can feed your soul and bring joy to you. It could be as simple as sitting down for a chat before sleep, doing community work or just taking a break each day for your favourite cuppa.

When your soul is emotionally rich, that will positively influence your family's life, too. Add on additional peace of mind by taking precautions to ensure their safety, eating well-balanced meals for a healthier life or even gifting them a brighter life through an insurance plan that protects them financially in the event of illnesses or other tragedies.

The current highly competitive society has its fair share of stress and pressures — we need not do any extreme life changes but instead choose to focus on the small little things within our control. Take small steps to feed our family and ourselves holistically to stay bright, happy, and healthy.

Raymond Lew is the CEO and country head of Sun Life Malaysia. For more information, visit sunlifemalaysia.com

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