

The Tribune

B O D Y A N D M I N D

health

'Maximize Your Health While Building Your Wealth'

■ By LISA LAWLOR
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THINK that spending less hours working means less productivity and less money? Well Dr Gabi Cora, a medical doctor for the last 20 years and a corporate wellness consultant, has found a way to do it.

After having multiple patients come in with complaints of headaches, minor illnesses and excruciatingly long work days, she began to see a pattern that needed solutions. Dr Cora formulated the "Maximize Your Health While Building Your Wealth" workshop five years ago, and has been travelling throughout the US, Asia and South America, promoting her programme ever since.

"The medical paradigm was not addressing these hard workers' issues, so I decided to integrate health and wealth issues into one simplified plan," she told *Tribune Health*. "And as a physician I've always loved to

help people achieve their best potential, creating lifestyle strategies, and promoting preventative medicine."

The health and wealth programme looks at the pressure executives and workers have in today's tough economic climate to meet the challenges of a business environment that has increasing competition and decreased resources.

Dr Cora works with any type of business to reduce the work day by up to 25 per cent. She has successfully worked with the soft drink industry, for companies like the Coca Cola Company and Pfizer, for organisations such as the University of Miami and the World Bank, as well as government programmes like Employee Assistance.

At each workshop Dr Cora takes individual's interests and commitments into account while formulating a plan for each person to follow, including the four pillars she's found to be essential to human health.

The first pillar, she said, is repetitive exercise. This sits at the top of her list because it has proven to be more relaxing than sports. Activities like walking or swimming are best, but it can be expanded to include rowing or training on an elliptical machine.

Secondly, nutrition can be a challenge for people who are so busy they don't eat or, when they do eat, they can only find time for packaged or processed snacks which are the least nutritious foods. "Food is the fuel of our brains and our bodies, and inconsistent feeding makes inconsistent production for success." She compared this with supplying a car with gas, which everyone knows would not simply run on a gas supplement.

"Many people feel they can replace food with supplements at every meal and this is a problem. It turns into an 'over the counter' problem because you need an upper like coffee in the morning, and a downer like

sleeping pills or alcohol to make your racing mind fall asleep in the night," she said, adding that this cycle produces tense energy instead of productive energy.

The third pillar is sleep. "Many people minimize the importance of this pillar because they don't understand that when you're younger, your body can take a lot more abuse than when you're older." In your twenties for example, you may have been able to skip a night or two of sleep and still function topnotch the next day, but in your thirties, forties and fifties, bad sleep cycles cause production to decrease severely.

And finally, the fourth pillar is relaxation. This will vary from person to person, but can consist of activities from repetitive exercise, guided imagery, listening to music, meditation, lying down and closing your eyes, to building something you're very focused on such as model cars.

There are those however, who don't believe that such a

plan is applicable to the Bahamian environment. Mr Dionisio D'Aguilar, president of the Bahamas Chamber of Commerce, said that this is not a subject that many Bahamians would jump at. "Dr Cora is talking about a lifestyle change that requires discipline. We all know what to do for a healthier lifestyle, we just need to discipline ourselves to do it," he said.

Dr Cora's response to such an argument however, is that when you're in the trenches of a tough work schedule, you're so exhausted that you may not be able to find a way out. "It's hard to see any way you can step back from commitments, and unfortunately many only take a rest once they get ill," she said.

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• Dr Cora is a wellness coach, working with corporate warriors and entrepreneurs, and a corporate wellness consultant assisting organisations in the full range of



Dr Gabriela Cora

wellness to critical situations. A renaissance woman, she is a medical doctor with a master's in business administration, a best-selling author, keynote speaker, spouse and mother of two young adults. For more information, call (305) 762-7632 or visit www.ExecutiveHealthWealth.com