

# Focusing On The Journey

Ko Hui Yun, CA (Singapore),  
Chief Operating Officer, All Saints Home



**AS THE CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER (COO) OF ALL SAINTS HOME**, which has four nursing homes and three senior care centres, Ms Ko Hui Yun oversees the operational and strategic planning aspects of the social service agency. On top of that, Ms Ko also drove the crisis response team during the pandemic and now, her portfolio includes looking into enterprise risk, ensuring the organisation's risk control and compliance. "Although I wear multiple hats, it's been a very fulfilling journey, especially when I can serve meaningfully together with a united and dedicated team," she explains.

Ms Ko acknowledges that as a working mum, there would be times when she would have to make certain choices and sacrifices. "It helps to have strong family support and I'm proud to say that my work environment supports work-life flexibility." Put simply, this means that "when there are family exigencies, we have the latitude to handle those first; similarly, when there are work emergencies, we have the responsibility to step up and do our part".

A Chartered Accountant of Singapore or CA (Singapore), Ms Ko worked at Deloitte as Audit Manager for nearly six years before joining All Saints Home as its Head of Finance in 2013. In 2019, she assumed the role of COO. "My first six years in



"Live every day as if it's your last to maximise the time you have, whether you're working, being with your family or doing the things you want to."

audit gave me a strong foundation for what I need to do in my current role," she notes. Her experience in audit, which involved project management and engaging stakeholders from different functions and industries, was especially helpful.

Like many women leaders, Ms Ko keeps a packed schedule. Her job requires her to be present in person much of the time, but she also ensures that she is there for her two children – a son and a daughter who are respectively five and three years of age.

## TAKING TIME FOR ONESELF

Ms Ko says that making time for oneself is very important.

A few months ago, she was encouraged by a close friend to go for a gym trial session. "I decided I need to get back to exercising, because my old injuries were troubling me." There was some initial hesitation as she was intimidated by the gym culture but she soon found a personal trainer who helped her overcome her fears. "He told me, 'Nobody is looking at you, they're looking at themselves!'"

Ms Ko accedes that it has not been easy to embark on a strict routine nor to keep it going. "It's challenging especially if you have children. It seems like there's never enough time to spend with them. However, I am blessed with strong family support. My husband, parents and in-laws encourage me and play their part. It also helps to have an accountability partner – a friend who checks in with you to see how you're coping."

All her efforts are paying off. "I have noticed the changes," she says. "I feel energised, and my mental well-being is strengthened. Maintaining an active and healthy lifestyle makes a big difference."

## "ME TIME" AND THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

Ms Ko intentionally schedules "me time" into her calendar. "I take pauses to reflect and recharge," she explains. "I started journaling again as I want to capture memorable events, especially with my children. Journaling forces me to stop and pen down the things I am grateful for – it's something I've done since I was young," she reveals. "Before the pandemic, I would also go on spiritual retreats and volunteer for overseas mission trips."

She also carves out time for another soul-enriching activity she loves: reading. "I love reading books on leadership, self-improvement and parenting. Right now, I'm reading a Christian book titled *Having A Mary Heart In A Martha World*. It's about strengthening the relationship with God amid the busyness of life. This book reminds me of the perspectives on how to pursue a joyful life while extending meaningful services to people. That really speaks to me."

Ms Ko's personal motto in life is to focus on the journey with joy and gratitude. To her, happiness is "a purpose-driven life, whatever role I may be playing. As a daughter, sister, wife and mother, I have a purpose. At the workplace, I also have a purpose. Purpose directs my pursuit of happiness".

For the women reading her story, Ms Ko has these words of encouragement, "I hope that we can be kinder to ourselves. We can take small steps to find time for ourselves and build a community that supports one another."



Ms Ko schedules "me time" to reflect and recharge so she can perform the roles that are important to her, such as being a mother