

Sidebar

*Nourishing yourself empowers your kids*

Published in the magazine *Metro Mum*, in the Philippines. May 2008.

“My *yaya* is so lucky,” bemoaned one working mom, “she gets to have a day off!”

Working moms are among the most fatigued members of the workforce. Many new moms realize how little discretionary time they really have the moment their 60-78 day maternity leave ends. They feel they have one body working in two parallel universes. They are at in the office attending to clients, deadlines and at the same time thinking of vaccination schedules, checking on the nanny and giving instructions to the help. Moms who choose to breastfeed bring their own breast pumps and coolers to work, and they have to work on their reports and presentations between periods of expressing milk. The demands on one’s time increases when kids enter school – there’s homework, school activities, weekend activities. Many female executives prepare their children’s reviewers and study aids during their lunch breaks, and some have their kids brought to the office after school so Mum could guide them with homework even as she takes business calls. And we didn’t even mention Dad.

The resultant fatigue is not just physical – but psychic. Moms are burdened by the guilt – some self-imposed, some cultural – of spending more time with their clients than with their families. They know they have to slow down or fall apart, and yet, they feel they have to run faster just to keep pace. Vital Switch teaches techniques from meditation that would help the busy 21<sup>st</sup> century woman regain control and renew her sense of wellbeing. Samantha Keen, Vital Switch marketing director, shares some tips:

**Start by creating space for yourself, even a small one.**

“Take your first steps by giving yourself 10 minutes each day just to be alone. Taking time out for yourself is the first step to letting go,” says Keen. “Then make a list of things you want and systematically make them happen. This means finding the small things that could make a difference to your wellbeing and making them part of your reality. Finally, it helps to break your old patterns - find new ways of doing things, new ways of behaving – don’t stick to old patterns just because they are a habit.”

**When you arrive home from work, take time to find your center before engaging the kids.**

Keen suggests: “Learn how to feel your heart, the center of your chest when you need it. When you get home from work, take a few minutes to feel the center of your chest. Just feel, do not think, and do not let your mind stick to emotions. Then you can take this space of centering into the time with your kids.”

**Mind your thoughts.**

“Remember that meditation and self awareness can be developed when you are in action – and one of the first steps is to learn that awareness is very different from thinking. If you make an effort to learn how to drop thoughts and just be with your kids, they will also have more room to grow and enjoy your presence,” says Keen.

### **Make time to recharge during the day.**

Says Keen: “We cannot always have 8 hours [of sleep], but nothing replaces the need for the body to sleep. However, what we can do is help people to ensure they get the best quality of sleep. Also if you do not get enough sleep, take 15 minutes to lie down and do a relaxation exercise during the day - maybe when you get home from work, or maybe in the afternoon. This is a good way to recuperate quickly.”

### **Do something you are passionate about.**

“People who are passionate about what they do are very vital. Working moms should make room in their lives for what they feel passionate about, something that motivates them, a reflection of their own personal wantings. This will be giving you more energy instead of take away energy. People around will benefit from it. Just do ten minutes of what you really want to do, and your kids will benefit from that. It will empower your kids, and self-empowerment is vitalizing,” she says.

### **For working moms who have left for work abroad:**

“I would emphasize that in order to look after others they must also look after their own needs. They will find it helpful to give themselves some support, care for their own simple desires is important. The children will not benefit if the mother is treating herself badly out of guilt. If you can take a little time for yourself each day, it will help you to connect with your own Truth. This can also help the children,” says Keen.

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*Vital Switch will be in Manila from May 12<sup>h</sup> to June 30, for the following workshops:*

- ☞ *May 25-31, Inner Space Interactive Sourcing (ISIS) workshop at the Lopez Center.*
- ☞ *June 7, Vital Switch Workshop on stress management at the ABS-CBN Building. to register*
- ☞ *For details contact: call 0918 963 2305 or email: [vitalswitch@yahoo.com](mailto:vitalswitch@yahoo.com); or visit their website for details: [www.vitalswitch.com](http://www.vitalswitch.com).*