

# Energy Management: Bringing Your Best Self to Every Role You Play

Allergan recognizes the important role women eye care practitioners play within the optometric and ophthalmic communities. Visionary Insights for Eye Care Women—VIEW—is an initiative established by Allergan that is dedicated to supporting and promoting women optometrists and ophthalmologists.

This article marks the second in a series that will appear in *Advanced Ocular Care*, its sister publication, *Cataract & Refractive Surgery Today*, and the digital publication, *MillennialEYE* ([www.millennialeye.com](http://www.millennialeye.com)).

## SANDRA FORTENBERRY, OD



Women often tend to be multitaskers. The key to being a successful multitasker is to have a great team. Be sure to surround yourself with positive people who support your goals. It is invaluable to have confidantes who offer you advice and give their honest opinions. Be wary of those who constantly tell you not to reach for your goals or stretch out of your comfort zone. A true mentor and friend will advise you of the pros and cons, provide candid feedback, step back while you make a decision, and then support your choice.

To be your best self, you have to prepare your mind, body, and soul to achieve your goals, and this starts with taking care of yourself first. Get enough rest and eat well; feeling good spiritually and physically can energize you beyond measure. You cannot take on the world or care for others until you are healthy first.

Set priorities and then let the rest go. I used to like my closet organized by color and season. Now, I am just thrilled if my clean laundry gets on a hanger, and I would rather spend that time with my family. Do not get me wrong, I still like things organized, and it relieves my stress to have things in order. There is a point at which I realize, however, that my daughter will not remember how clean my house is when she grows up, but she will remember how much fun we had together planting seeds in the garden or getting our nails done.

Be sure to live your life and not somebody else's idea of what your life should be. You must avoid comparing yourself to other women and then feeling down about what you have or do not have, what you have or have not accomplished. Be yourself. Look around at other women that inspire you, investigate methods that work for them, but do not worry if that same method does not work for your life. Keep trying new ways to improve.

I have to make sure I put my priorities in order. It is different for everyone, but for me, it is about putting God and family at the top of the list. Once I do that, then I am free to serve my profession and career. No matter how small or big the task, get a goal, get a plan to achieve that goal, and get to work.

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## APRIL JASPER, OD



I recently listened to a speaker who said that there is no such thing as work-life balance. He said that in real life you will never have "balance" nor should you want to. His argument was that life is made up of a series of challenges (whether we like it or not), and the sooner we learn to accept that and take them one at a time the more fulfilled we will be. He even suggested that being "off balance" was normal and a good place to be.

I found myself almost relieved when I first understood this concept years ago. I know that in my life there have been several of those "challenges." They have not been easy, however, they have provided me with learning moments that have made me who I am today. Being in the midst of challenges sometimes seems unbearable, so I have found it tremendously important to surround myself with people who care about me and truly want to help me make my life better. I also spend significant time reading, listening to uplifting and motivational material, and attending seminars that are unrelated to my industry but are intended to help me become a better

person and strengthen my faith.

In my experience in all the roles I play, I find the easiest way to get off track is to try to be and do what someone else tells you that you should be or do. If I follow my “compass” and not the “clock” as you read about in Stephen Covey’s book, *First Things First*, I find that I truly can bring my “best self forward.” My advice to my friends and colleagues always has been and always will be to follow your heart and be true to your beliefs and never let anyone put you in a box.

At the end of the day what enables me to bring my full and best self to every role I play in life is knowing that by doing so I truly have the opportunity and the potential to change the world. What fulfills me is the knowledge that I gave every moment every piece of energy possible in an effort to make someone else’s life better. When we are focused on putting first things first, it is amazing how much energy we will have.

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#### MARGIE RECALDE, OD



Sometimes we women can get lost in and overwhelmed by our responsibilities as a wife, mother, daughter, sister, friend, and professional while trying to squeeze in personal time. Sooner or later, those of us who are trying to do it all will burn out from stress, anxiety, and exhaustion. Rather than setting unrealistically high expectations, we need to learn to set boundaries, get organized, prioritize our responsibilities, and most of all banish the guilt of not being able to do it all.

We have all been in the situation where we just do not have enough time in the day to complete everything. Even if there were enough time, the paperwork and projects do not stop, it is an endless stream of ongoing responsibilities. So, instead of working until you drop, set boundaries on how much time you are willing to spend working. For example, setting a “no

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work” time zone from 5:00 PM to 9:00 PM will allow you to focus on family time. Consider limiting evening meetings or travel out of town to a couple times a month.

To succeed in achieving a healthy work-life balance, it is essential that we organize and prioritize our responsibilities. Use a calendar app to keep track of events and another app to categorize tasks. Many of these resources even allow you to share information with your spouse. Our success in the workplace largely depends on our partners taking extra responsibilities at home. Ask for more help with domestic responsibilities and parenting duties. Studies show that the risk of divorce is 50% less when husbands do half the housework and wives do half the earning.

We often place everyone else’s needs before our own, and we may even feel guilty for saying no, fearing that we will disappoint someone. Unfortunately, when we place ourselves last on the list, we do not have anything left to give. In this scenario, work productivity suffers, relationships become strained, and personal health issues arise. It is essential we say no at times and not feel guilty. It is also equally vital for us to say yes to scheduling personal time. Creating personal moments of just 30 to 60 minutes a day allow us to recharge, refocus, and reenergize.

Once a work-life balance is achieved, we will find passion, motivation, and happiness in both our work and personal lives. Grab the reigns of life and take control of your responsibilities.

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