

LUSOG DIWA (WELLBEING) SERIES: THRIVING IN COVID-19

Inspiring Stories From Exemplary Women

Lusog Diwa (Wellbeing), a weekly online conversation, focuses on how groups and individuals help alleviate challenging situations during the ongoing coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and provides listeners with practical tips on how meditation and inner resilience help us cope with the current situation.



The webinar, which was initiated by the Pause Muna Peace Muna program of Brahma Kumaris Philippines, features professionals and community sharers, who bring together their stories of compassion and generosity to inspire new zoomers and netizens.

Guests share their stories and BK panel discussants provide insights into the key points of the guests that focus on faith and spirituality. Key spiritual principles on soul and Supreme Soul are also highlighted based on the stories and insights that have been gathered during the session.

On June 9, two awardees of The Outstanding Women in the Nation's Service (TOWNS), Isa Lorenzo and Sab Ongkiko, shared how they supported those who had become "sudden" doctors and health workers.

"We came together in response to a need," which was at that time, personal protection equipment for doctors and health workers. And they had to do it urgently, immediately and passionately because they saw many doctors and frontliners dying because of lack of protection.

"We needed to gather initial information for where and when [to send support]," Isa Lorenzo, who had a medical background, said. "Then, we reached out to all types of hospitals, jails, clinics, medical centers, to bring the highly critical needs of the pandemic--the most basic protection of doctors and nurses with the protection equipment."

They mobilized all kinds of help, including from the military, to transport donations to different islands in the Philippines. Initial donations in cash from artists and businessmen were channeled through TOWNS.

Sab Ongkiko, who is a teacher by profession, said her role “was to organize and mobilize where the support was to be given. My role was to do the shopping, checking quality control, and getting the best use of the money that was donated.”

“I had to learn packing procurements, observing how the doctors and nurses were working. We asked, most of all, to learn to be resilient, to be humble, to ask for help and advice from other women (and men too).”



Apart from the urgency, the immediacy of their campaign, they had to coordinate remotely. They learned to “become more efficient. On the way, we created structures for an efficient organization.”

Emmie Velarde, a former entertainment editor of the Philippine Daily Inquirer, saw the work that Isa and Sab did in parallel with her previous work in the newspaper: “We had a war room, and basic was to respond to a need. As journalists, for example, some are quite sensitive and it was important to highlight their contribution to the total effort. It’s important to focus on why you are doing what you are doing. This shapes the goals and objectives.”

Panelist Merle Pimentel, vice-president of BK Philippines, was “amazed at how hectic the organization was. It was very important to have a clear vision.” She added that she saw how work was easier with women who are good at haggling and tapping resources. “I had to learn so much from other professional women who blended compassion and insight into skill and demonstration. It’s that coming together of authority and mastery together with intuition, kindness, and gentleness.”

Merle said “Meditation is at the heart of resilience.”