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As the mom of a 14-year-old and 18-year-old, I've always put my kids' needs and their healthcare first. Earlier this year, my husband Joe had skipped a checkup at his doctor, and I told him, "You can't do that, it's really important." And his response was, "So are yours, and you haven't gone in how long?"

That question made me realize I really wasn't checking in on myself.

It had been a while since I had made my annual appointments, and I really hadn't slowed down to do anything for myself in a long time. I was so used to just making appointments for the kids. When Joe pointed it out, I think that's when it actually hit me. I knew that if I didn't do something, there would be a possibility that if something is wrong, it will be beyond help by the time I take the time to get checked out. So I said, "Okay, I need to take a step back and take care of myself."

That was my "aha moment" to do something for myself.

That week, I called and scheduled everything I was neglecting. But I knew that I needed to actually take some time for myself on a regular basis. I got an exercise bike for Christmas and that was my moment where I said, "This is it. I'm going to do it." I loved spin classes years ago, so I thought it would be a good idea to do that at home. Years ago, I was diagnosed with an autoimmune issue and weight gain was a side effect. I made that an excuse for a while, but I knew now that I had to get that in check and focus on my health.



I started going on the bike for 30 minutes a day.

After my first ride, I just kept going. I have this chart where I color in a box for every day that I work out. It helps me stay committed. So no matter what's going on, when I get home, I'm like, "All right. I scheduled this for today." I'm not an everyday scale-watcher, but my clothes started feeling better on me, so when I looked at the scale and saw I lost weight, I was like "Oh my gosh."

It also gave me my "me time" back.

Some people do yoga or meditation — I go on that bike and all I think about is finishing my ride. It's become my way of decompressing. As soon as I'm done, I look at my metrics, like my heart rate, and then I color in my chart and I feel good knowing I checked it off for the day.

My husband has been my biggest supporter.

Joe and I have been together 20 years. I'm so grateful he gave me the push I needed. Now, we disconnect from our phones at night to spend more time together. And when I do my 30 minutes on the bike, he and my kids all know not to bother me and to let me have my time. I'm lucky to have their support.



THRIVE