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The new secret to
gorgeous skin

Inspiring LiFE makeovers

From losing 40 pounds to gaining a (surprise) baby, these well-known women faced major challenges and emerged with richer lives. Here's how they did it.

As told to

Jennifer Graham Kizer

Valerie Bertinelli

Reclaiming a healthy body—and outlook

*In 2001, the former One Day at a Time star's 20-year marriage to musician Eddie Van Halen ended. Valerie gained 30 pounds before getting her body—and life—back on track. Her memoir, *Losing It: And Gaining My Life Back One Pound at a Time*, was recently published by Free Press.*

My marriage to Ed had been under a lot of strain for a long time when we separated. We were lucky in two ways: We never hated each other, and we both were extremely committed to Wolfie, our son, who was then 10 years old. But I felt terrible for not being able to keep our family together.

I traveled a lot the first month after our breakup, trying to come to grips with what was happening, and lost weight rapidly. Then depression kicked in, and I ate to suppress my feelings. I felt guilty about changing Wolfie's life. Raising a confident, beautiful young man has always been a top priority for me, and here I was ripping his family apart.

I wasn't sure what direction my life was going to take, either. I'd always been a great team player. But, even with all my tenacity, I still couldn't save my marriage. What would I do now? I wasn't sure, so I ate ... and gained 20 pounds while shooting *Touched by an Angel*.

I didn't want to be seen at that weight, so I stopped attending parties. My knees were aching, and I couldn't take the stairs without breathing heavily. But I'd gotten to a point

where I didn't think I deserved a strong, healthy body. I'd failed at staying with diet and fitness programs so many times already; I knew I'd never hold myself accountable.

Ironically, realizing that helped me turn it all around. It was true: I couldn't lose weight (or maintain my weight loss) alone. So in April 2007, I signed on as a Jenny Craig spokesperson and vowed in front of TV cameras to lose 30 pounds. I also got my boyfriend [financial planner Tom Vitale, 46] on the program with me. When I lacked motivation, he was always there to encourage me.

Today, I'm 40 pounds lighter. And, after almost four years, Tom and I are going strong. Ed and I are still friends, and we're both so proud of Wolfie, who has grown up to be an incredibly gifted musician.

How did I get to this point of contentment? The positive changes have to do with my mind-set. During traumatic moments, I listen to my inner voice, which is positive and comforting. And I don't let negative comments ratchet up my stress anymore.

*“Food and men
were causing me
pain, so I had to get
away from both.
Now I know how to
have—and enjoy—
both of them.”*



Back on track:
Valerie is looking
(and feeling)
better than ever.



**Single-mom
smarts:** How
does Tichina
do it? "I have
a backup
nanny, and
a backup for
the backup!"

Tichina Arnold

Discovering her maternal superpowers

Tichina, who plays Rochelle Rock in the TV series Everybody Hates Chris, took on a role she never expected in 2003: She became a single mother.

Among my friends, I'm known as a free spirit. I'd never even thought about having children because I was so career-driven. I was that person who would play with other people's kids, and then say, "Time to give them back!"

When I found out I was pregnant at age 34, I saw my life flash before my eyes. By then my boyfriend, [music producer] Carvin Haggins, and I had already broken up. We had planned on being together forever, but it just didn't work out. The first thing that went through my mind was: *I'm not where I want to be in life. I would prefer to be married!* My next thought was, *Oh my God, I'm totally incapable.*

Alijah Kai was born in March 2004. One night when she was three days old, I noticed her staring at me. "It's just

*"I was that
person who'd
play with other
people's kids
and then say,
'Time to give
them back!'"*

me and you," I said. Then I fell to my knees and started crying. I pleaded to God to help me raise my daughter the best way I could.

From the beginning, I've had help. My mother and younger sister relocated nearby in California, and my aunt lives with me. Alijah attends a day-care center on the lot where we film *Everybody Hates Chris*,

and talks to her dad on the phone, though she doesn't see him much because he lives in Philadelphia.

I tell people all the time that if I had to really live the life of a single parent, with no help, I can't imagine how I'd do it. But my maternal instinct has kicked in. Once, Alijah fell off the changing table when I was several feet away—and she never hit the floor: I pulled this superwoman move and caught her. Things like that happen to me all the time now. I never knew I had these powers. Alijah brought them out in me.