

**PICK THE
WINNER!**

SEE HOW ON P. 187.

**KATE ADAMSON-
KLUGMAN, 45**
"Focus on what
you can do, not
what you can't"

B. J. REED, 66
"Good health is
not just physical
or mental—it's
both"

CARON TATE, 56
"Find the humor in
everything you do"

**ROBIN
LEFFLER, 41**
"Help someone
make a positive
change"

JANET VITTON, MD, 43
"Put yourself in charge of
your health"

WHAT GOOD HEALTH REALLY LOOKS LIKE

Out of hundreds of entries, these 5 women inspired us most with their commitment to health. Now *you* choose the \$10,000 winner

- BY TERESA DUMAIN
- PHOTOGRAPHS BY DANIELA STALLINGER



In June, visit prevention.com/pictureofhealth to share your own inspiring video and story.

Who inspires you? That's the question we asked in our February issue when we launched our first *Prevention* Picture of Health contest—and the response was tremendous. Hundreds of videos and essays poured in, as family and friends nominated one another, and others shared personal stories. We laughed along with some videos, and some moved us to tears, but the five women you will meet here really stood out. They prove that leading a happy, healthy life is possible, no matter what challenges you're forced to face—and they inspire all of us to give it our best try. Learn how they do it, and tell us which one you think embodies the Picture of Health. (Cast your vote by midnight, May 25! See how on p. 187.)

“I made a miracle recovery”

KATE ADAMSON-KLUGMAN, 45, Manhattan Beach, CA

Some days, you'll find Kate Adamson-Klugman standing in an auditorium, persuading people they can accomplish the impossible. Other days, she'll be seated before state legislators, lobbying for the rights of people with disabilities. And every day, this award-winning author is a hands-on mom to two teenage daughters—and *still* makes it to the gym.

Impressive? Sure. But what makes her story extraordinary is that in June 1995, at age 33, she suffered a devastating brain stem stroke that left her paralyzed. The once-superfit mom, who was

preparing to become a personal trainer, couldn't breathe or swallow on her own. “But I was awake and aware,” she recalls. “I was trapped inside my body and given a one in a million chance to survive.”

Looking back, she credits her fitness level before the stroke, her husband's support, and “God's grace” for getting her where she is today. In about 8 months, she was back up on her feet. “I didn't allow myself to look at what I had lost and not even ahead,” she says. “I stayed in the moment and focused on weekly goals.”

Her left arm and left leg from the knee down

are still paralyzed, so she wears a leg brace and uses a cane to get around—but she's back to her old ways, eating right and working out. She spends 2 to 3 hours a day at the gym, split between the StairMaster, stretching, and weight training. And in addition to her inspirational speaking and advocacy work, she founded support groups for stroke victims and helps educate kids about disability awareness. Of course they are challenges, but for Adamson-Klugman, it's about perspective: “We get one body to live in, and I do the best I can with what I've been given.”

HAIR AND MAKEUP BY KRISTINE OULMAN FOR R. J. BENNETT REPRESENTS; STYLING BY MARIA RUOCCO



Every day I...

■ **Count each step.**

“You don't have to run in the Olympics or be a body builder to be healthy. Just stretching or taking a walk makes a difference.”

■ **Put family first.**

“After 3 PM, I'm with my girls—either watching my 15-year-old, Stephanie, cheer or rooting for my 13-year-old, Rachel, at her softball game. I don't take one moment I have with them for granted.”

■ **Stay positive.**

“My attitude played a huge part in my recovery and still helps me today.”

“Take action, get educated, and care for the body you have—that's what helped me when I needed it most”



“Happiness is a decision—and I choose it”

“I fought past my pain”

CARON TATE, 56, Los Angeles

Caron Tate had planned to sing and act her way to stardom, and for a while, she was well on her way. She did commercials, stage acting, and modeling. But one night after a show, she noticed a pins-and-needles sensation running up and down her arm. And that’s when the lights in her dreams dimmed. For Tate, her spirits had to hit bottom before they soared again.

A pinched nerve in her neck first caused that prickly feeling, which then led to constant, and sometimes excruciating, pain. “I couldn’t sleep, and some moments I couldn’t even turn my head,” says Tate, who eventually had to give up performing. “I was so down on myself. I felt like my life was over.”

A point came when Tate decided she could either continue to pity herself—“or I could shut up and do something,” she says. “I knew I had to stop waiting for things to make me happy, and instead I

needed to go for it.”

She read about alternative therapies for her pain and found a combination of chiropractic care, acupuncture, visualization, and massage that worked for her. “I took control,” she says, “and I love helping others do the same.”

She’ll share health articles with coworkers, and while she admits she may nag a bit, her goal is to encourage them to do something for themselves every day. “When someone tells me they can’t work out for an hour, I tell them I bet they can march in place for 5 minutes,” she says.

For Tate, good health is not about size zero clothes and extreme workouts; it’s about eating right (most of the time), being active (hula-hooping is her favorite exercise), and loving yourself for who you are. “Today I know no matter what life gives me, that emotionally and spiritually, I will be okay.”

Every day I...

■ **Do at least one good thing.** “Then I write it in a journal. I jot down everything from drinking my eight glasses of water to jogging for 40 minutes—that way I can be reminded what I’ve accomplished.”

■ **Take the chore out of cooking.** “I prep all my vegetables while I watch my favorite TV show. It makes the time fly and saves time later.”

■ **Laugh.** “People get so stressed-out over the silliest things. I refuse to waste the energy, and instead focus on the funny.”

“One moment changed my life”

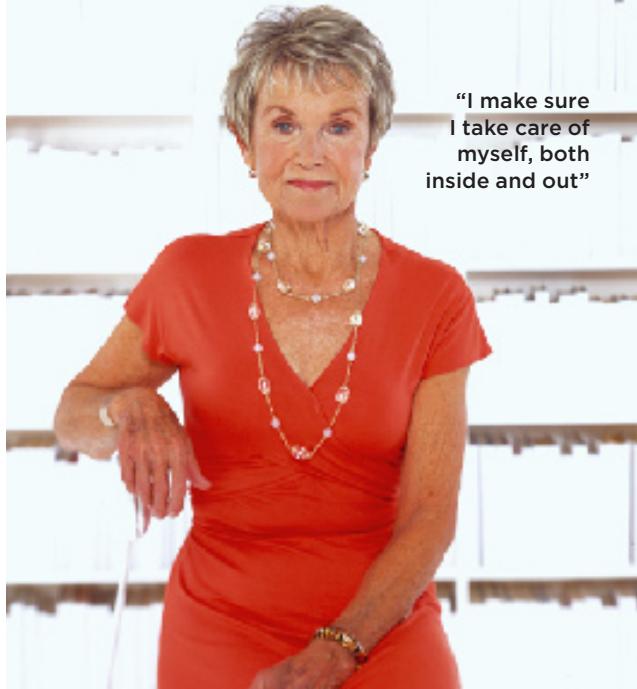
B. J. REED, 66,
Medford, OR

One morning in December 1971, B. J. Reed put her 3½-year-old son, Bobby, and 5-year-old daughter, Robyn, into her green Pinto and headed to the store. She never made it. A head-on collision took Bobby’s life and put Reed in a coma for 3 days, with broken arms and legs and severed tendons in her knee.

The doctors said she wouldn’t bend her knee again or even have any more kids. Reed, though, had other plans. She and her husband, Bob, had two more sons—and she started running. “I did it just to see if I could,” says the now-retired schoolteacher. “I figured after the first mile, I bet I could do 2.” And so it went, until Reed worked up to running her first marathon in 1984 and then the Boston Marathon in 1996. She kept

training, and in 2000, she and Robyn, now 40, biked from Portland to New York City in 10½ weeks to help promote self-esteem in girls.

Today Reed runs, bikes or swims for about 1½ hours a day. When she’s training for a triathlon, she’ll do a little more. “Exercise is a huge part of my life,” she says. So is eating right, meditating, and setting yearly goals, which for Reed has included skydiving and mountain climbing. What’s she most proud of? “That I can do whatever I set my mind to.”



“I make sure I take care of myself, both inside and out”

Every day I...

■ **Read for the soul.** “I start my day reading a few motivational quotes or a short spiritual story. My favorites are from *Daily Word* and *Simple Abundance*.”

■ **Stretch.** “Twice a day—in the morning and before bed. It’s great for your body, and makes all the difference in how sore or not sore I am.”

■ **Keep a gratitude journal.** “Laughing with my family, Bob doing so well on his diet, my wonderful dog—that’s all in there. It’s hard to feel unhappy when you’re so thankful for everything.”

“I saved my mom and sisters from cancer”

JANET VITTONI, MD, 43, Rochester, MN

When Janet Vittone, a physician at the Mayo Clinic, encourages her patients to get mammograms, the conversations sometimes end in tears. That’s because she tells a story about a woman, her two sisters, and their mother—all of whom were diagnosed with breast cancer in the span of 1 year. The story she tells is her own.

A self breast-exam in 2001 revealed a dimpling under her nipple. “As soon as I saw it, I knew,” says Vittone. Within a week, she had a mastectomy. Vittone, who had been nursing her youngest son, had to wean him quickly. “I knew our lives would never be the same,” she says. How much, though, she could never have imagined. As soon as Vittone, then 38, was diagnosed, she encouraged her family to get tested as well. Her mom, oldest sister, and youngest were all diagnosed with breast cancer. She

cared for each of them through their recoveries.

Vittone had always been healthy—she never smoked and has been a runner since high school. Today, she still runs 4 to 6 miles a day and lifts weights. “My sons are my motivation,” she says. “And when I tell people my story, I’m not trying to make them cry. I just want them to put their health in their hands.”



“I hope to empower others to take control of their lives”

Every day I...

■ **Stick to my exercise plan.** “Even during my cancer treatment, I biked to and from radiation and ran throughout chemotherapy. It helped me stay focused and relieved stress.”

■ **Pass it on.** “I assistant-coach my sons’ soccer teams in the fall and spring, and we hike, bowl, and play racquetball the rest of the year. It gives us time together and helps instill the importance of exercise.”

■ **Promote health screenings.** “Be proactive and learn how to do self breast-exams.”



“I’m healthier and in better shape now than I was in my 20s”

“I get people excited about exercise”

ROBIN LEFFLER, 41, Oregon, OH

Ask Robin Leffler how she used to describe herself, and you’ll hear: *mom, wife, daughter.* “Somewhere in there, I lost myself,” she says. But after her divorce 8 years ago, Leffler decided it was time to do something for her. She signed up for kickboxing at her local YMCA. A few months later, she was asked to teach the class.

Leffler went from never exercising to working out 6 days a week and getting trained to teach body sculpting and cycling, too. “For the first time, I have back muscles—and that’s a cool feeling,” she laughs. But more important is what her new regimen has done for her heart. She has tachycardia, a condition that causes a rapid heartbeat, among other heart-related issues. Doctors had even considered giving her a pacemaker, but since she started exercising, her heart has improved.

Today this single mom teaches eight fitness classes a week, fitting it around her regular 9-to-5 sales job. Plus, she helps out as a trainer for her daughter’s volleyball team. Does she ever take a break? “Never, but I love it that way,” she says.

Leffler’s attitude and enthusiasm are infectious, so much so that she was asked to run her Y’s Lose Big program, an 8-week group weight loss session that includes fitness and nutrition advice.

How does Leffler describe herself today? “I’ll always be a mom, a daughter—but I know who *I* am now, too. I feel strong and complete.” ■

Every day I...

■ **Have a homemade lunch—at work.** “On Mondays, I load a week’s worth of sandwiches, soups, and fruits into my fridge at the office. I don’t have to think about it again that week, and it helps avoid temptation.”

■ **Lend a helping hand.** “Whether it’s exercising with my daughters’ teams or showing a client how to set up a weight machine, it feels good to get involved.”

■ **Envision a healthy future.** “I plan to be kickboxing at 80 years old. I’ll always make the things that help me feel good a priority.”

CHOOSE THE WINNER

Casting your vote is easy!

1. **Visit** abcnewsnow.com.
2. **Watch** our finalists’ videos and reading their personal essays.
3. **Vote** for your favorite Picture of Health finalist by midnight (EST) May 25. The woman who gets the most votes will receive a \$5,000 prize and a \$5,000 donation to her charity of choice. She’ll also appear in *Prevention’s* October issue.