

RECLAIM YOUR CONFIDENCE.

In 2010 Donna Washington was told her headaches were being caused by a benign brain tumor. During surgery to remove the mass, the doctor realized the growth was malignant and cancerous cells had entered the brain. After aggressive radiation, Washington was grateful to be in remission. Unfortunately, her hair follicles had not survived. "You look in the mirror and think, *Who is this person?*" she says. She tried an expensive hair treatment that didn't work and settled for wigs that were difficult to clip. The pain was compounded by her young son asking, "When are you not going to be sick, and when is your hair growing back?" Then her New Jersey stylist told her about Bologna, Italy-based Cesare Ragazzi Laboratories, which provides custom hair replacement systems using 3D printing. A mold of her scalp was created, and a few months later she had a system that she could swim and sweat in, and keep on for months at a time. "Get dressed—I'm taking you to dinner," is what her husband of 25 years, Andre, said when she got home that night in 2016 with her new hair in place. "I felt like myself again," she says. "I kept trying until I found what worked for me."



38 GET YOUR LIFE.

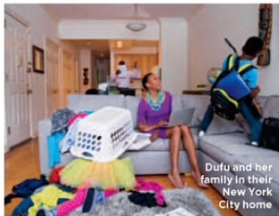
While you can't control risk factors for heart disease like age, race and family history, the American Heart Association reports even modest changes to your diet and lifestyle can improve your heart health and lower your risk by as much as 80 percent. To lessen your risk, **39. drink alcohol in moderation;** **40. minimize your sodium intake and make healthier food choices;** and **41. for five days a week, get at least 30 minutes a day of moderate physical activity such as brisk walking and stretching exercises.**

42 DROP SOME BALLS.

Taking off our capes is essential for the vitality of Black women after generations of being the backbone of this country and conditioned to sacrificing for others. Leadership expert Tiffany Dufu, author of *Drop the Ball: Achieving More by Doing Less*, realized she wasn't superwoman when she found herself crying in the bathroom with breast milk on her shirt after having her first child and returning to her high-powered job. In the years since, she's learned to embrace life's mess and shares her strategy in her book. In the Dufu household—along with her husband, Kojo, and kids, Kofi and Ekua—lives Mel, their management Excel list. It includes a column for each family member and all household needs, "everything from haircuts and laundry to changing oil in the car and watering the plants," she adds. "You realize there's too much to be done for all of you to accomplish. Therefore, we are clear on what won't be getting done."

43 NURTURE YOUR CIRCLE.

The best thing you can do for yourself is to keep good people close. "We surround ourselves with people who want us to be our best selves," Dufu says. **44. send a thank-you note to ten people who make your world better,** and **45. share this article with a friend.**



Dufu and her family in their New York City home

46 COUNT YOUR WINS.

Last summer Dufu and her husband celebrated their 20th anniversary with a party of their friends and family who supported them on the journey. "I started off doing the vast majority of household labor and caregiving in our relationship and it wasn't working," she says. "I had to renegotiate the terms of our relationship in a big way and had a husband who was willing to do that work." Savor your progress!

47 CHOOSE YOUR NOS.

It was great for Dufu to learn that her daughter, Ekua, 8, was excelling in piano last year. The excitement halted when the teacher said that the youngster could go further if Dufu attended classes. "I kindly explained to him that during the lesson, I'm working to earn the money for her lesson," she says. "Knowing the value and time I give to my daughter helped me not feel guilty."

48 FOCUS ON WHAT MATTERS.

"At the end of each of our lives, for our eulogy you aren't looking for people to say, 'Well, she got a lot of things checked off her checklist every day,'" Dufu states. "You want people to say that you made the world a better place."



Follow **ESSENCE** Senior Editor, Lifestyle & Relationships Charraeh K. Jackson on Instagram @**CHARRAEH**, and look for more stories in our **Self-Care** series to come.

RECLAIM YOUR CONFIDENCE.

In 2010 Donna Washington was told her headaches were being caused by a benign brain tumor. During surgery to remove the mass, the doctor realized the growth was malignant and cancerous cells had entered the brain. After aggressive radiation, Washington was grateful to be in remission. Unfortunately, her hair follicles had not survived. "You look in the mirror and think, Who is this person?" she says. She tried an expensive hair treatment that didn't work and settled for wigs that were difficult to clip. The pain was compounded by her young son asking, "When are you not going to be sick, and when is your hair growing back?" Then her New Jersey stylist told her about Bologna, Italy-based Cesare Ragazzi Laboratories, which provides custom hair replacement systems using 3D printing. A mold of her scalp was created, and a few months later she had a system that she could swim and sweat in, and keep on for months at a time. "Get dressed—I'm taking you to dinner," is what her husband of 25 years, Andre, said when she got home that night in 2016 with her new hair in place. "I felt like myself again," she says. "I kept trying until I found what worked for me."