

# Catherine DeFrancesco



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Catherine DeFrancesco has made spreading wellness her life's mission. Certified in holistic nutrition and yoga instruction, the Toronto native is the owner of SOL Yoga studio in Wynwood, with plans for others to open soon in Fort Lauderdale and on South Beach. She has four children, two sons, aged 19 and 16, and two daughters, aged 14 and 11. Busy with business and frequent international travel, she still makes time for carpooling and after-school activities.

**HOW SHE STARTED:** During her college years, Catherine was diagnosed with cervical cancer. Then her first child was born prematurely, weighing just one pound. "I was immediately thrust into the medical system, trying to keep my head above ground, with very little know-how. Looking back, there's no way I would have come out so strong, nor would my son, without the care we received from the doctors and nurses. It was exceptional to say the least. From then on, I vowed to put health before anything."

**HER PASSION:** "Yoga was life-changing for me. I became a more mindful person, more attentive, and a better listener. It ignites an enlightened version of yourself that goes far beyond the mat. It seeps into the way you raise your children, and how you treat others and yourself. I believe yoga is the secret of life."

**MOUNT SINAI:** "They've taken great care of my family, and I'm proud of the work they do. They have a great facility and do great research, but it's the outstanding staff that changes lives on a daily basis. I also know how important donations are to provide the best care to those that may not be able to afford it. Giving really is the best medicine, and we are so fortunate to have a leading hospital in our corner."

**ON GIVING:** "I truly believe we must give — give to others in need, give to those less fortunate, to those without hope. I encourage others to give, because when a child feels a sense of hope, or a sister gets a much-needed donated organ, we all win in the end. That's love for one another at work, and there's no stopping its power."