



**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

STORYTELLER

JUSTIN & KAYLA RICHIE

Justin and Kayla lived a life of indulgence, but two years ago Justin said enough. He was tired of being overweight and was ready to do something about it. He decided to go to the Y where his brother frequented, and Kayla followed suit.

It wasn't an overnight change and the couple had to do more than come to the gym, they had to completely change their lifestyle. They went from eating whatever they want, drinking soda, and not being active to the complete opposite. Now, there's no junk food or soda in the house. Kayla does a lot of home cooking, and the family eats until satisfied versus until bloated.

At first, the change wasn't welcomed by Justin and Kayla's children. "They told us, we're happy you're getting healthy, but you don't have to take away our snacks and soda," said Kayla. After some time, they were okay with the change, in fact, the kids started losing weight and getting healthier too. "Whenever we do go out to eat, they typically get water and they're more appreciative of when we do have snacks," said Justin.

Justin and Kayla are a staple at the Y. You'll see Justin here six days a week! He typically comes with his brother Jordan. He credits Jordan with showing him what he needs to do to get in shape and holding him accountable to go to the gym. "I wouldn't be where I am today without him," says Justin. Kayla comes about 2-5 times a week, she says mom life can keep her busy sometimes. She says, Heather not only trained her but pushed her to be the best she could be. "We're friends now, so we can vent to each other, train together, and see how far I've come," said Kayla.

During their exercise journey, Justin has lost 65 pounds and Kayla has lost 35. They say if they miss a day at the gym they feel irritable. However, when they are there, they have more energy, can take out any frustration, and have seen an improvement in their mental and physical health.

The couple keeps coming back to a gym because they want to be healthy and live a long life. However, they keep coming back to the Y because of the family aspect and it's no surprise that the people at the Y have become like a family. Justin and Kayla shared about how they were invited to a "Y wedding." The couple getting married also went to the Y. At the front of the reception was the couple's family and at the back were all the friends the couple made at the Y. (In case you're wondering everyone who attended counted the wedding as a cheat day. Justin and Kayla agreed cheat days are necessary.)

Justin and Kayla also offered some advice for anyone starting their exercise journey or who feels stuck in a rut. Stop making excuses, you're not going to see progress if you're not doing anything. "Don't be scared, you will fail but that's okay because it happens to everyone, said Kayla. "You have to believe in yourself and never give up," said Justin.



Thank you Justin & Kayla for being a **STORYTELLER for the YMCA!**