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My husband Josh is super outgoing and our kids are the same way, but I've always struggled to talk to the people around me. I'm a homebody and I've been comfortable that way for a while, but I recently started feeling like I should try to put myself out there. My kids do a lot of activities -- like cheer, football, and soccer -- and I would always stay in the car while other parents would socialize with each other. I felt like I needed a push to break out of my comfort zone.

One day, I heard my father-in-law talking about making your bed in the morning.

He was joking that just making your bed in the morning makes you feel like you've accomplished something and can take on the day. That comment really stood out to me because I felt like I needed that push in the morning. I made my bed the next morning, and right away I felt like I did something good for myself. I may not have gotten a mountain of laundry done, but I accomplished something. I kept going for a few days, and I started thinking, "Okay, so I did that. Let's move onto something else. What's next on the list?"

Making my bed gave me the push I needed to take my next step.

It felt like I checked one thing off the list and I was ready for something else. I was ready for something bigger: I decided to challenge myself to talk to five people every day. I figured that if I'm constantly surrounded by other parents when I'm picking up my kids, I can start by talking to them and it would become easier over time.

The next day, I was picking up my daughters from cheer practice, and I was waiting in my car.

The practice was running over, so I finally said, "Okay, you can do this. Just walk over there and say 'hey.'" So I got out of the car and joined the other moms who were talking to each other. I felt a little weird just standing there, but I decided to start a conversation with one of them. I was like, "Hey, which ones are your girls?" And we ended up starting a whole conversation.



I was tempted to look at my watch the whole time, but I stuck with it and another lady ended up joining us whose son was on the team. It was weird for me, but I was proud that I did it.

My conversations are slowly getting easier, but I am trying not to be so hard on myself.

Some conversations are easier than others, and I try to make a little connection to make it less awkward. I'm trying to keep telling myself, "I can do this." My youngest daughter is happy because she is having more friends over at the house now that their parents know me better. I'm not at 100% yet, but I'm still trying.

I recently started thinking, "If I can talk to somebody else, then of course I can volunteer at this event."

I love volunteering and I've been wanting to get more involved, but the hard part was always wanting to leave early and not being able to sit and talk to people. But after talking to five people a day, I feel more comfortable doing it. Now, we volunteer for the concession stand at the football fields for track and at volleyball games.

I never would have guessed making my bed in the morning would give me the push I needed.

I'm actually working towards becoming a school board member and I'm currently running as a candidate. I've been wanting to do it for a while and finally I realized that I've gone to plenty of school board meetings and I want to share my ideas. And even if I don't make it, I still want to share the ideas I have for the school. I feel like my whole mindset has changed. I'm still an introvert at heart, but I am more comfortable speaking up. I just needed to rip the band-aid off, and I'm so happy that I did.



THRIVE