

# Kathryn Cobb

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**\$5,000 WINNER**  
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It's been a tough time for my family. My husband, Michael, was laid off from his job and it was stressful. I'm 32, Michael was my high school sweetheart, and we have two kids, 12-year-old Ayanna, and 10-year-old, Ashton. I'm a medical assistant in a cardiology office, but I had to do extra work on the side as a home health aide to make ends meet. It seemed like I was working all the time and I felt like I was neglecting our children. There were moments when I would break down and cry. Michael and I were eating comfort food like burgers and fries, and I felt guilty because I was passing on bad habits to the kids. I was also struggling with polycystic ovary syndrome, and I weighed almost 300 pounds.

## **My colleague, Florice, encouraged me to start the Thrive Challenge.**

I don't like doing things alone, so it seemed perfect. I downloaded the Thrive app. The first Microstep I chose was switching from sugary drinks to water. I started eating more vegetables. We all love green beans and zucchini. I make grilled chicken with salad and instead of pasta, I bake spaghetti squash with olive oil and add a ground turkey sauce. We've cut back on desserts and have fruit instead; I love strawberries and blueberries. But for a treat, we'll sometimes get frozen yogurt with fruit — without the chocolate syrup!

## **We bought new bikes and we're going for family bike rides.**

I haven't ridden a bike for a long time, so it was nerve-racking at first, but now I'm loving it. There's a long trail near our house with lots of trees and it's very relaxing. We also joined the YMCA and we all work out together. I've lost 20 pounds so far — I feel lighter and I have more energy. I've gone down a size in my scrubs, which is exciting. I'm so proud of myself.

## **At work, Florice is a mentor to me.**

We walk together at lunchtime and talk about everything from our families, to cooking, to our obsession with coffee. We hold each other accountable and this month, we've actually challenged ourselves to do no extra spending: buying just what we need and not what we want! We're definitely the shoe ladies of the office and I stood my ground and resisted buying sneakers I wanted.



All this positive energy pushes me to do better. Recently a patient lost her insurance and I was able to help her apply for financial assistance through the hospital. Everything was paid for and she was very grateful. She said there was one thing less to worry about.

## **My husband has a new job so I don't need to do two jobs anymore.**

He's a police officer. Michael and I are in a much better place. We go for "day dates" when we're off work — we'll run errands and have lunch together. I have more time so we're also doing more as a family. We went to see the movie Sonic the Hedgehog, which was great.

## **Every evening we have family reading time.**

We started doing it to motivate the kids to read. We'll all read our own books sitting together in the living room. It's a fun challenge. The kids have to write a summary of what they've read and I check it for grammar. And for me, it's great to get back to my books. I always loved reading but I'd stopped when things got stressful. Now I'm finding it really calms me down. I just finished *Midnight Sun*, by Twilight author Stephanie Meyer.

## **Michael and I are saving for a new house.**

We own a townhome, but the kids have outgrown it so we're putting money away for a bigger house. Every time we get paid, we take out 10% and put it into a savings account. And it's a relief not to have to worry about being able to buy groceries.

## **Every day I tell myself I'm strong and I'm smart.**

I have my affirmations on my phone and read them before I go into work to shape the way I feel for the day. I'm happier in every way and I know everything is going to be okay.



THRIVE