

\$5,000 WINNER

Tricia Marshall

**Fulfillment Center #4087
Bethlehem, PA****Movement****Microstep**

Getting up from my desk to stretch regularly and go for short walks

**Outcome**

"I'm making my well-being a priority."

I've always loved running — it's my passion. But recently, my life became stressful. My daughter, her husband, and their three kids moved into our house, and I accepted a promotion at work. Life was overwhelming and I stopped running or doing any exercise. I was depressed, and disappointed in myself. As an HR manager, I was always advocating for the well-being of others and recommending the Thrive Challenge to associates, while neglecting myself. It was time to get started.

I began getting up from my desk to stretch regularly and go for short walks. Then I bought new running shoes, put them on, and challenged myself to run for just two minutes. I gradually increased my running time. I'd switch between running and walking, and soon I built stamina. One great Microstep: running for the length of a song. Listening to upbeat music inspires me to keep moving.

A Microstep that helps me stick to a training schedule is setting fun alarms on my phone to remind me: "Today is Run Day!" I began setting out my workout clothes so that when I get home from work, I feel excited to change, get out of the door and go. I love running on a country road with a nice breeze, just enjoying nature. It's a great stress reliever. And after each run, I spend a few minutes writing in my journal to celebrate each little achievement.

On those days when I feel too tired to run, I still find the discipline to go for a walk. Having an accountability buddy helps me to stay motivated. My neighbor and I go for runs and challenge each other. My husband, Randy, isn't a runner, but he's supportive too. Sometimes when I go running, he'll join me on his bike. He'll carry a water bottle and make sure I stay hydrated. To switch things up, sometimes I join him on bike rides.

After a few months I felt so good, I ran a half marathon. I'm 48 and it felt like a great achievement. I also competed in a 5K for cancer research. My grandkids love running with me, and we did a children's charity run together. Getting back to my hobby has been amazing. I'm more relaxed, I'm stronger, and I'm happier. Along the way, I've also been learning self-compassion. My goal isn't perfection, it's about progress!