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Before starting the Thrive Challenge, I was always exhausted and struggling to figure out healthy things to eat. I drank a lot of soda and ate a lot of fast food. I've recently been diagnosed with type 2 diabetes, but I was struggling to lower my blood sugar and lose weight. I felt sluggish at work, and I didn't have any energy to play with my kids. And I was putting my unhealthy eating habits on them by always feeding them fast food.

My coworker Liz told me about the Thrive Challenge.

She had recently joined, and it seemed to be really working for her. I was looking for a push to get me out of my routine and help me change my diet and exercise more. I read so many stories of other people who had overcome the same challenges I was dealing with, so I decided to get started.

The first thing I focused on was trying to get a bit more exercise every day.

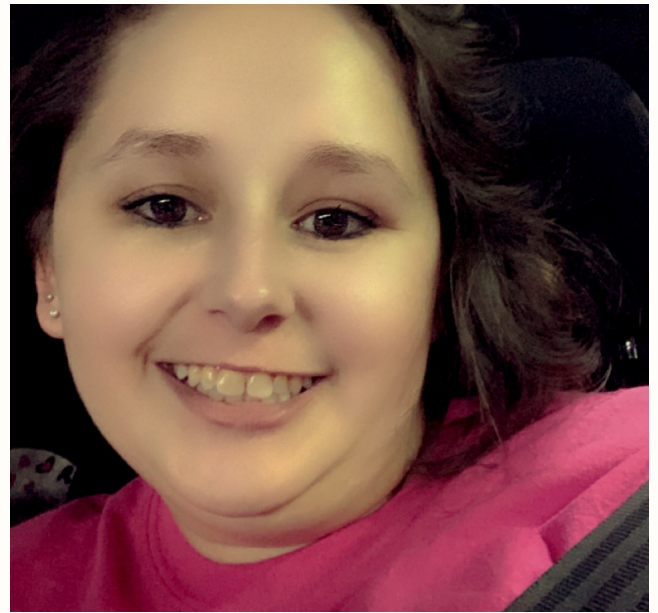
After work, I'll take my three kids and our two dogs out to walk down our dirt road for a bit, just to get everybody included and have a little bit more time with each other. It became an everyday thing. We all go for a walk, we come home and eat some fruit, and then we watch a movie!

Quitting soda helped a lot.

I was up to 10 or 12 sodas a day! I've replaced all of that with water. Now I'll have one soda every few days, and the first thing I do when I wake up is grab a bottle of water. Just doing that has already started to lower my A1C levels.

Next, I tackled my diet.

I don't really eat a lot of fast food now. I have started eating more fruit and nuts. I also cut out a lot of starches and drank more water. I eat more baked meat than fried meat now, and I started substituting brown rice for white rice, wheat bread instead of white bread. We eat more vegetables. My kids are eating better which makes me feel better as a mom. We sit down and eat together after cooking now as opposed to when we were eating out.



I have so much more energy now.

I'm spending a lot more time with my family now that I'm not feeling so tired all the time, and I'm not dragging at work. Before the Challenge, doing the registers seemed like it took forever, and I would feel exhausted by the end of replacing and removing the shelves and changing labels and cleaning. But now it doesn't seem that bad, and I still have energy by the end.

My eldest daughter said "Mama, you do so much more with us now!"

It was awesome — it just made me feel really good about myself and about what I was doing. And I'm much more confident now. I've lost about 30 pounds, and my coworker Liz — the one who told me about the Thrive Challenge — was the first to notice the change. Now I have the will and the energy to keep working on myself. The Thrive Challenge has changed my life by giving me the extra push I needed.



THRIVE