

Hannah Olson

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My stepfather went to prison and I was feeling very bitter and mad at him. And I was upset for my mom. My own dad passed away when I was eight, and my stepdad raised me and my brothers with my mom. I'm 24, and I wasn't feeling good. I was struggling and I was always tired — I couldn't snap out of it. I was eating a lot of junk food and ice cream, and I wanted to get healthy. My friend, Paula Smith, a Thrive Challenge winner, encouraged me to get started in January. She said, "You just do little steps, and it's not hard."

I started with the Microstep of walking 1000 steps before work.

I use the treadmill at our community center and now I'm also doing weights and high-intensity interval training workouts. I have more energy, and I don't have brain fog anymore.

I live with my mom on our family's farm and we walk together.

There's a mile and a half dirt road and we'll walk there and back. We talk and share stories about work. She works at Walmart too, and she has a second job at the local elementary school. We're very, very close.

I bought a gallon water bottle.

It reminds me to drink enough. I cut down on fast food and ice cream. I'll make a turkey wrap with spinach and tomatoes in a low carb tortilla, and bring it into work. At home, I'll make grilled chicken marinated in Italian dressing and have it with broccoli or cucumber and tomatoes. And every Sunday, my mom and I eat dinner together. We'll watch our favorite show, "NCIS." I don't eat late at night anymore, and I'm eating less in general.

To relax, I spend time with my friends.

We got together for Valentine's Day — we call it "Galentine's." We went shopping at a beauty supply store and I bought a face serum and eye patches. Then we all went back to my friend Michelle's apartment to watch movies and had dinner. There are five of us, and we've been close since high school. It's nice because I can talk to them about my problems, and share things I can't tell my mom.

I love taking care of my skin.

If I'm feeling a little down I'll put on a face mask and my cooling eye patches to reduce puffiness. My skin has never looked so good — I love it. I also take care of my nails and go for manicures. I'm really into hot pink nails right now.



I've lost 10 pounds and I'm more confident.

I've accepted I'll never be super skinny but that's not what matters — I'm striving to be healthier and happier, and not focus too much on the way I look. I feel more comfortable as me.

By taking one step at a time, I'm staying calm.

If a thought comes into my head, like "I hate my stomach," I'll tell myself, "look how far you've come; you're beautiful." And when I feel upset, I channel that energy into my workouts.

Meditation is helping me stay positive.

I sit down and reflect on what happened with my stepdad. I'm learning to forgive and forget. I'm also praying, which brings me peace. And I spend time reading. I'm reading a great book called *Confidently You* by Joyce Meyer. She says you need to put your confidence in God, because he never lets you down.

I already have an associates degree and I'm going to finish my education.

I want to get a bachelor's degree in human resources. I'm hoping to become a people lead, and move on from there. I feel a lot better about my life and I see a positive future for myself now.



THRIVE