

**\$5,000 WINNER**

# Tina Doty

**Distribution Center #6028  
Crawfordsville, IN****Stress  
Management****Microstep**

Whenever I'm stressed or upset and tempted to light a cigarette, I close my eyes and do a breathing exercise.

**Outcome**

"I haven't smoked for six months and it makes me cry talking about it because this addiction doesn't control me anymore."

I've been a smoker since I was 19, and I have COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease). I used a nebulizer and inhalers, but it was still hard to breathe. I'm 61 now and I was smoking one and a half packs of cigarettes a day. I have three kids and five grandbabies. My kids would ask me to quit and I tried many times, but I was never successful.

**One day last fall I decided I had to stop smoking.**

I was hiking at Raccoon State Park with my son, Seth, and his family. As I was climbing a hill I was barely able to breathe. I looked up and saw my grandkids at the top looking down at me struggling. I wanted to be on that hill with them, and the next day I started the Thrive Challenge. I thought I would get the support and accountability I needed to change my habits.

**I read a lot of stories on the Thrive app, which I found incredibly inspiring.**

I read about brave people dealing with cancer and obesity, and people who had lost children. They were going through much more difficult things than me and they were thriving. I thought if they can do it, I can too.

**Stopping smoking meant I had to change my habits.**

Instead of grabbing a cigarette, I'd have a piece of sugarless gum or a mint. Another technique that helps me: right after I eat, when I would normally have craved a cigarette, I get up from the table; I leave the situation that triggers my craving. I'll grab my bottle of water and go for a walk. And at work, I've joined our Thrive support group; we're always there for each other.

**Breathing Microsteps are really important to me.**

Whenever I'm stressed or upset and tempted to light a cigarette, I close my eyes and do a breathing exercise. That helps me gather my thoughts and calm down. I watch Thrive Resets. My favorite is a video of a babbling brook; you can hear the water streaming over the rocks. I'm a country person and it helps me relax, bringing me back to my center.

**Keeping my hands busy is another great tool.**

I love woodwork, including restoring old furniture. I bought a 1943 cedar chest for \$20, stripped it down, stained it, and gave it to my son and his wife for Christmas. It's beautiful, and I was so proud because it took my mind off smoking and at the same time I was doing something with purpose.

**Affirmations are helping me create a new way of thinking.**

I'm constantly telling myself, "Tina, you're breathing easier, you're resilient, you can do this." I used to get out of breath just rolling over in bed. Now I don't lie in bed hearing myself wheeze.

**I've had the same wonderful doctor for years and she's thrilled.**

When I told her I finally quit smoking she hugged me. She had tears in her eyes. It gives me goosebumps thinking about that day. I still have COPD, but it's under control and I can go for walks without getting out of breath.

**I take my 3-year-old grandson, Neal, out on his bike and we play in his sandbox.**

I have six and a half acres, and we'll walk around the property with his wagon. He'll pick random flowers, rocks, and pieces of mud to show to mommy and daddy. And I can play on the floor with 1-year-old Zeke. I'll never be able to run a marathon, but I can climb that hill now — and that's a big thing.

**My kids are proud of me.**

My son, Seth, walked into the house the other day and said, "Mom, it smells so good and you're doing so good." He's happy he doesn't hear me cough anymore. I can laugh without coughing now. I haven't smoked for six months and it makes me cry talking about it because this addiction doesn't control me anymore. I know I'll be around for my grandkids.