

Tonyua Adams

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\$5,000 WINNER
Neighborhood Market #3450,
Killeen, TX

My son, Eddy, passed away from heart failure in 2015. He was 26, and I basically gave up on everything and put my life on hold. I was in a state of being rather than living. I didn't have any joy, and I wasn't spending time with my husband, Tony, or our other three kids.

I was eating to try and find happiness.

I weighed 199 pounds — a lot for someone who is only 4 feet 11 inches. I felt I was aging fast and every part of my body hurt. My life was spiraling out of control.

One day, I sat on the floor with my two-year-old grandson, Asher.

I was in such pain, I couldn't even play with him, and I was heartbroken. That was the moment I realized I had to change. I'd been doing the Thrive Challenge on and off for years, but now Thrive was calling my name.

I cut out sodas and fast food and started eating fresh fruit and veggies.

I stopped snacking on potato chips and instead I'd have cucumber and carrots with ranch dressing, or a small ham and cheese sandwich. I lost 15 pounds. I decided to follow my husband who had gastric sleeve weight loss surgery six years ago. He lost a lot of weight and has kept it off.

A year ago, I had the surgery, but it wasn't a shortcut.

You literally have to change your mindset, and that's where Thrive comes in. The accountability and direction gave me the support I needed.

Tony and I are managers at Walmart and we're taking the Challenge together.

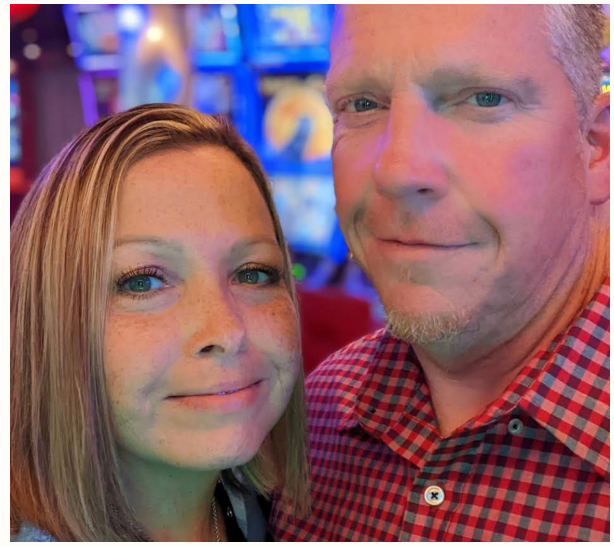
We started meal prepping. We'll make taco salad or meatloaf that will last a couple of days. Planning ahead is great and so much cheaper than eating out.

We're going to the gym together and Tony pushes me.

I'm up to three miles on the treadmill. And after working out, I'll have a relaxing sauna. We're going for hikes and doing more together as a family. I have the energy to get on roller coasters and water slides with the kids again.

We go bowling, play softball, or we'll hit golf balls.

Last week I was running around the park with Asher, who's now three, and I was just in heaven. I've lost 58 pounds and I feel amazing.



In the evening we're connecting without our phones.

We'll ask the kids to tell us something good that happened, and then they tell us about a challenging situation — and how they handled it. Kendyll, who's 19, is studying to be a nurse. She's working with elderly patients who have dementia and she talks about how it breaks her heart. I say, "You're their ray of sunshine." And she gets it.

Tony and I have "couple time."

A friend opened up a theater in our town showing old-school movies, and we saw E.T. We just loved it. We're big on exploring places — Galveston's our favorite place to visit. We'll look at the old mansions and hear about the history. We like to get up early, walk along the seawall, and watch the sunrise. I'm an amateur photographer and now I'm much more motivated to take photos. I have more joy.

We choose positive words to focus on and mine right now is courage.

I'm doing the Thriving Performance course, and one part actually focuses on courage. When I saw that, oh my gosh, I had an epiphany! I've been taking a deep dive into courage, because I always used to doubt myself. For example, I never had the courage to submit a Thrive Challenge story until now.

I joined the Ladies Discipleship Class at my church and we support each other.

We can all be vulnerable because we trust each other, and we talk about challenges we've gone through. It's not easy to talk about losing my son — grief is something that never goes away — but I've been able to let a lot of it go. I see Eddy's life now as a blessing. I've gone past the anger and sadness, and I can think of the happy times and talk about him without breaking down.

I love reading stories on the Thrive app.

So many everyday people like me are proving that simple changes can have a huge impact. The magic is in the motivation. I just turned an energetic 53, and I have a whole new life.



THRIVE