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\$5,000 WINNER
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I had a difficult childhood and didn't have a great relationship with my parents. I had depression and severe anxiety. We moved around a lot, so I never got to keep friends, and things happened I can't even talk about. I was an average-sized human, but my mom told me I was overweight. I'm 21 now, and I've seen 12 therapists and a doctor who told me I had PTSD from childhood trauma. As an adult, I continued to have problems with food.

My partner, Jared, and I have a one-year-old son, Artemis.

I had a C-section, which took a toll on my body, I was always tired and felt overwhelmed. I was sad because my body never bounced back and I gave up on myself. I didn't care what I ate, or how I dressed — I was flat-out depressed. I weighed 250 pounds and I didn't want to go out in public. A co-worker, Stacey, inspired me to start the Thrive Challenge.

I stopped eating processed food.

Jared and I are cooking dinner together. We're making lasagna and broccoli cheddar bake. I'm eating more veggies — I'm obsessed with broccoli!

Jared and I dance in the kitchen. We love doing the waltz.

It's very sweet and heartwarming, and we just have fun. The baby will be in his playpen or bouncer watching us. He's always laughing and blowing raspberries.

I'm walking at least 10 thousand steps a day at work.

I take my son for walks with my sisters — we go to a great hiking trail at Grand Traverse Commons, which has just been renovated. There's an amazing variety of trees and cool statues. I've lost 16 pounds and I'm feeling much more energetic.

The baby's crawling now, and I follow him around the house.

He's a super-cute, very happy baby. We don't let him watch T.V., and we vowed when we got pregnant that he wouldn't be an iPad baby. We love reading to him. My dad bought him science books, and right now we're reading Rocket Science for Babies by Chris Ferrie. It's fun because I'm learning too.

To relax, I'm focusing on my breath.

It's helping me stay calm. In the evening, Jared and I unwind watching Smosh videos on YouTube that make us laugh. And we listen to crime podcasts like Small Town Murder. We're homebodies and we don't go out a lot. When we do, we'll go to Starbucks and I'll get a peppermint mocha. I think it's important to be happy and have a nice coffee with my boyfriend!



We host game nights.

Jared's best friend, David, and my best friend, Katelyn, come over and play Monopoly or Life, and Cards Against Humanity. It's a very creative way to spend our time and we get to decompress and socialize. These evenings warm our house. Jared's in charge as the game master. We'll make food like my boyfriend's mac and cheese, which is garlicky and delightful!

I love writing fictional fantasy stories about dragons and elves.

They kind of have The Lord Of The Rings themes. I also love to draw. I draw pictures of my own body from photos of myself. I'm appreciating my beauty. It helps because I've had a lot of self-image issues, and seeing myself in my drawings makes me feel better about myself. I know I'm allowed to be human and be myself.

I'm getting a degree in computer science.

I'm pretty excited because my dad is a computer programmer. And I didn't think it was going to happen for me, so getting this chance through Walmart is awesome.

My goal is to buy a house.

We need room for our son to run around, and I want a garage because we're obsessed with classic cars. I'm buying a 1971 Plymouth station wagon. My boyfriend has a 1967 Mercury Cougar and a 1989 Buick Reatta. There's something amazing about how shiny the chrome is, and it's fun to go for rides in them.

There's been a lot of healing in my family.

We've struggled a lot in the past, but now my dad is supporting me and my relationship with my mom has healed a lot.

I feel super awesome, I'm on track, and I'm motivated.

I understand that I can take Microsteps and I don't need to take on the whole world. I'm a better person and a better mom.



THRIVE