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For a long time, I was unhappy and struggling. I was overweight, I weighed 272 pounds, and every day I'd say, "Today's the day I'm changing my eating habits." But I never did. I had high blood pressure and headaches. I was hoping for a blast of magic to will me to change. I'm a working mom with three kids, and it was hard. Then one night my husband, David, was choking and I had to perform the Heimlich maneuver on him, and I saved his life. But I could barely fit my arms around him due to my size, and that was a wake up call — not a wake up call I'd ever wanted.

I downloaded the Thrive app and slowly implemented Microsteps into my day.

First, I opted for water or fruit-infused water instead of a sugary drink. And I opted for healthier meals. My favorites: asparagus with Parmesan cheese, and air fried chicken, with carrots, leeks, and zucchini noodles as a substitute for pasta! I also started cutting down on portions. For snacks, instead of chips, I'll have eggs with lemon pepper and salt or peanut butter and apples.

I swapped the word exercise for movement.

I work from home and it's so easy to stay inside all day. But Movement Microsteps have really helped me get outside. I started walking 500 to 1,000 steps and gradually increased my walks to 5,000 steps. Another Microstep I love: when I brush my teeth I do some squats and I also do arm circles.

We go on family bike rides.

We live in the country and it's wooded — long roads with the sun peeking through the trees. And on the weekend we ride to the lake and go fishing. I love it. The Thrive Challenge is not just improving my life, it's great for everyone in my family too.

Microsteps are helping me to sleep better.

I set a daily caffeine cut off and I've created a consistent bedtime. I take a hot shower or bath, and when I'm in bed, I focus on the rising and falling of my breath for 10 seconds. Watching a Thrive Reset helps me relax and I charge my phone away from my bed.

I'm connecting with my kids — Cooper, Cole, and Connor — and I love being with them.

I take time to listen to them one-on-one. The older ones tell me about their days, and I ask them whether they've accomplished anything new. We're cooking together, and we all have our "thing." One kid peels carrots, the other chops potatoes, my husband prepares the chicken, and I make salad. And we have weekend movie night (usually Star Wars)!



My Saturdays are spent helping out at the local food bank.

I have always been one to offer a hand and now I have more energy. Doing it as a family is key. Our community gets donations from grocery stores. The food is packaged, a car pulls up and we hand out packages of foods like fruit, meats and veggies. Some people have been laid off, some are single moms on a low income, others are elderly. It's very rewarding and humbling and teaches the kids about compassion.

I'm a lot less stressed.

At home it was so stressful keeping the house tidy, figuring out meals, and taking care of the pets. Now, when I get overwhelmed, I do Thrive Resets. I stop, take deep breaths, and relax my shoulders. If I see dishes in the sink and a full dishwasher I shake it off, do some box breathing, and then slowly do one thing at a time.

I wake up with purpose every day.

I wish I could explain it better; I feel alive. We're planning a family road trip next year, we'll be hiking and camping in Yellowstone National Park, the Salt Flats in Utah, and we'll be exploring the Carlsbad Caverns in New Mexico. That's something I never would have considered before.

My doctor cut my blood pressure medicine in half.

I've lost 37 pounds, I'm healthier, my skin is radiant, and I don't feel fatigued all the time. My kids see the difference, they're so proud of me, and there's nothing that matters to me as much as that.



THRIVE