

Talluah Dinwiddie

.....
\$5,000 WINNER
Walmart Supercenter #1376
Hendersonville, TN

Growing up we didn't eat well. Here's the thing: I was raised in the South eating crummy food, loaded with butter, that was heavy in calories — whatever was inexpensive. I never had anybody teaching me a good way to eat. I was picked on as a child. I can remember in fifth grade a little boy called me BBT (Big Butt Talluah). That's always stayed with me. People would say, "for a big girl, you're so pretty."

Now I'm 40 years old and my husband, Christopher, and I have three kids.

Our daughter Addisen, is 10; we have a five-year-old son, Asa; and a three-year-old daughter, Aubree. We were shopping on a budget, buying frozen pizza and hamburger helper. I weighed 256 pounds. I was diabetic and on a weekly injectable. My husband is disabled and I was so stressed. I wanted to be there for my family, but I felt miserable.

I had heard about the Thrive Challenge and got started.

I knew it was a once-in-a-lifetime chance for me. The first thing I did was to go to the pantry and get rid of all the junk food like cookies and chips. I started to plan good meals like chicken, turkey, and salad, and I'm eating smaller portions. If I make spaghetti for the family, which is everyone's favorite, I'll bake a piece of chicken for myself and just have it with the marinara pasta sauce. Over the holidays we made delicious sugar-free cookies.

I get a lot of movement at work, in our busy store.

I'm also exercising with my daughter, Addisen, who's a cheerleader for an all-star team. We do everything from high knees to jumping jacks. We listen to music she loves like "Sunroof" by Nicky Youre and dazy, and "Party in the USA" by Miley Cyrus. She's keeping me young, that's for sure! And when the littler kids see us having fun, they join in. We also all go for walks around the park together.

My husband and I are spending more time together.

We just watched the movie *Where the Crawdads Sing*, which was good, but not as good as the book. Also, I have more energy for our family side-hustle. We run a haunted attraction for Halloween. It sits on 30 acres in Western Kentucky. We have a barn and a haunted maze, so we're doing lots of planning for the fall when we open again. It's something that we both enjoy and my children perform in it, hiding in the shadows and climbing out of coffins!



I've lost 50 pounds in the past year and my blood sugar levels have stabilized.

My doctor is thrilled with my progress. He said, "It's like you're a different person." I'm still on Metformin, but we've cut the dose in half. The plan is that by summer I'll be completely off all medication — and I know I'm going to get there.

I'm feeling so much better.

I'm happier at work and at home. My sister bought me a Simply Southern sweatshirt. I've always loved them, but never owned one before because they didn't make them big enough for me. It's navy blue with a hot pink trim. I tried it on and it fit and I walked around my house feeling like a million bucks. I don't have to buy plus-sized clothes anymore. The other day I saw my reflection in a window and I had to pause for a moment because I was like, "That doesn't even look like me."

I'm setting goals for myself and writing them down.

At the end of the year I'll see how many I've achieved. I want to reorganize my closet, I've had to give so many clothes away that were too big. I want to take the children to a water park that they love called Wilderness at The Smokies. And I really want to take the family on a cruise, maybe to Bermuda.

I feel confident, full of energy, and a little sassy!

Looking back at my childhood, I would tell little Talluah, "You're so much more than a number on a scale. And there are better things coming down the line for you." For the first time in my life my dreams are coming true in ways I never thought were possible.



THRIVE