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I decided to start the Challenge because when I saw the positive changes it caused in my partner. I knew I needed to make my own changes and stick to my better habits, so I was interested in Thrive, and I was finally brave enough to commit.

## **The Microstep that has helped me the most has been to go for a walk in the mornings.**

Every morning, after finishing my cardio routine, I go to a pool and swim. I find it one of the best exercises because it works all the muscles of the body and helps to improve breathing. Before I started exercising, I couldn't dance more than 2 songs because it gave me pain in my feet and I got tired very quickly. Now, every time I go out to dance or take a walk, I enjoy it much more since I don't stop at every moment to rest. Now I'm going on adventures like hiking in the mountains, which I could not do before the Thrive Challenge because I wasn't used to exercising or walking for hours as I can do today.

## **The first thing I did in my diet was to eliminate fast food restaurants as much as possible.**

At first it was super difficult for me to swap a hamburger for a plate of fruit, since at lunchtime it was my habit to eat out. When I forced myself to bring healthy food, I began to notice that after I returned from lunch, my energy was still at 100%. I also saw a change in my savings since I didn't spend a lot of money on junk food. Now my favorite dish is a green salad. I feel that it gives me a lot of energy. I compliment that with a fruit smoothie — that, for me, is the perfect combination.

## **I think the key to improving my sleep has been not to fail in my routine.**

Before the Challenge, every night I was simply stuck to my cell phone. Now, as soon as bedtime is approaching, what I usually do is to do a short exercise routine again and then disconnect from all kinds of distractions such as putting my cell phone away to charge and turning off the TV. Now I choose to read a book for 30 minutes before going to sleep so I wake up with energy every morning.



## **To manage my stress, I take deep breaths and listen to relaxing music.**

Going for a walk also contributes a lot to how I connect with nature. I used to get so desperate to find solutions to my problems that I would get off-track with my goals and lose all my progress. Then I realized that everything has a solution if you are calm and patient. Now that's something that I not only apply at work, but in my day-to-day life, because we will always have daily challenges. It's not worth losing everything that you achieved because of not knowing how to manage your stress.

## **Having set a schedule of time when I use my cell phone is key for me.**

Before, I spent too much time on social media — even at work — and that didn't let me do my job well. I decided to only use it at lunchtime only if necessary, and as soon as I get home I put it in the drawer. That helped me break the vicious circle that made me lose focus.

## **think the best part of the Challenge has been connecting with people, both at home and at work.**

I now have better communication with my family and with my coworkers, and I can listen better to others. This Challenge was a great change of lifestyle since it helped me to get out of my comfort zone. I don't want to go back to my old lifestyle — I want to continue learning every day about how to grow and how to connect better with people. I want to show that there will always be a solution for everything when you learn to connect with others, and above all, when you connect with yourself.



THRIVE