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Last year I knew I needed to make some changes because I was feeling unmotivated. I was stressed, disorganized, and depressed. And I wasn't feeling good physically; I rarely paid attention to what I ate. I'm 32 and I've been pre-diabetic since I was 16 — it runs in my family. My mother has diabetes and my grandmother died at 56 from diabetes. I don't want that to happen to me.

I'm a full-time employee at Walmart and I am also working on my Bachelor's degree.

And I drive for Uber in my spare time. I was so busy I didn't have time for my family or myself. I felt overwhelmed. Also, I felt that I wasn't appreciating my wife, Reina, and my mother. So I downloaded the Thrive app and began checking into Microsteps. I immediately felt like I was doing something positive for myself.

I started keeping a journal.

I began by writing about what I wanted to accomplish. It really helped me stay calm and organized. I felt more accomplished. I'd journal about what was causing my stress, like getting everything done in my life. Now I also write about what makes me happy and what causes stress. In the evening, I read everything I've written and make sure I'm on track. If I don't complete something I'll make a note to do it the next day.

You'd be surprised at how much journaling can help you mentally.

I might write down a Microstep, like this one: "When your inner critic flares up, pause and repeat a positive affirmation." I say to myself: "I can overcome any obstacle as long as I put my mind to it," or "I am going to live a long healthy life, eating food that's good for me."

Writing down healthy food options helps me plan good family meals and snacks.

I choose simple lunch options like hummus and avocado on whole wheat toast. And I write down what groceries I'm going to buy. I used to eat a lot of spicy candy and hot Cheetos. Now I eat nuts or Greek yogurt.

I'm cooking nutritious dinners.

One of our favorite meals is lemon salmon with garlic, tomato, and asparagus. And I like to make a salad with spring mix, beets, watermelon, apples, and goat cheese. It tastes amazing. I also do a healthy version of chile relleno; instead of cheese or beef, I make it with broccoli and cauliflower. It's delicious. Another Microstep I've been doing is drinking water instead of juice, so I've cut down on sugar.



I'm exercising every day.

My wife and I bought a treadmill, and I'm walking my dogs. I had a goal of completing a thousand steps a day, which I've been reaching, and doing a lot more. I've had back pain for quite some time, but I've been taking time to stretch and relax throughout the day, at work and at home, and I have much less pain now. I strongly believe it's because of all the stretching I've been doing. I am feeling better, and I'm hoping next time I go to the doctor I won't be pre-diabetic anymore.

I'm very family-oriented, and my wife and I are connecting more.

My mother, wife, and sister live under the same roof with me, and we take care of each other. I gather everyone to come to dinner and make sure we sit down and talk about our days. I share my feelings with Reina throughout the day and I make sure to let her know that I appreciate her. Communicating has definitely improved our relationship. Reina and I love dancing together — that's how we met. We're also enjoying kayaking, and we love animals, so we go to the zoo or to SeaWorld.

The Thrive Challenge is helping me find stability and calm in my life.

I have a lot going on and I can honestly say that by logging in to the app each day, and keeping my journal to give my life structure, I'm able to achieve my daily goals without being stressed all the time.



THRIVE