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I started with Walmart in 2005 as a single mother of four. I'd just been through a divorce and had to provide for all of us. I took advantage of Walmart's program to earn my GED. And eventually I become a floor manager in 2023. I wanted to really start focusing on my health.

I'd been diagnosed with diabetes in 2018, but I was still making poor food choices.

I was eating unhealthy foods, and I was overeating. I'd already given up smoking and wanted to lose weight. My partner, Javier, and I went out a lot to eat and I was very stressed about everything. I'm 52 now with four amazing grandchildren, but I didn't have any energy. I weighed 280 lbs. I was always exhausted. If I was out walking with Javier and my family, I'd have to rest and let them go ahead.

One of my peers, Gabino Suarez, shared his Thrive story with me and it was inspiring.

I signed up for the Thrive Challenge in April because the Microstep approach seemed doable. I started by cutting carbs and drinking more water. One recipe I like to make is pizza with a cheese crust, topped with Canadian bacon, pepperoni, and onions. It's amazing. I also like to cook cabbage with a little butter and I add ham. In between meals I drink protein shakes and water instead of soda. I feel better about myself because I know I'm eating food that's good for my body.

Javier is very supportive.

We go to the zoo and we walk around the lake near our home. We eat at home and cook together, and we're only going out for dinner once a week.

Microsteps helped me move more, like doing squats when I brush my teeth.

I do arm circles each day, and I park my car further away from the store so I can get in more steps. I began doing short walks and built up to 10 thousand steps a day, which is a lot for me — something I could never do at the beginning of the Challenge. I can climb the stairs at work now, which means I can be more productive.

I've lost 47 pounds and I feel much, much better.

Eating better and moving more has helped me become much healthier. My lower back pain has improved, and I'm pretty sure it's because I weigh less.



Connecting with my family is a priority.

It's very important to me to spend time with my brother, Warren. He lives in Florida. He'll come to visit me or I go see him. I took my 13-year-old granddaughter Isabella on vacation with me to visit him, and we went to Universal Studios. We arrived when the park opened and walked for miles. We stayed all day. I had the energy to go on all the rides with her — she loved the motorcycles and the Hulk rollercoaster. We had a lot of fun and it was amazing being with her.

I love being a grandma.

I take them shopping and we go for walks. I can play with my youngest granddaughter, Ava, now. I run around after her outside, which she loves.

Doing breathing exercises helps me stay calm at work.

I've started setting boundaries. I also add my deadlines to my calendar, so I am not doing everything last minute. And I don't check my phone all the time like I used to. I enjoy watching Thrive Reset videos which take you to beautiful cities all over the world, like Paris and London. I find them very relaxing.

Making small choices has made a big difference.

I like being part of a community of Thrivers, and I look forward to checking into the app every day. It gives me a sense of responsibility. The other day, I realized how far I had come when I was able to sit comfortably in a booth at a restaurant. I felt empowered and accomplished. I'm going to continue to live my best life ever. Cheers to Microsteps!



THRIVE