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I used to have a really poor diet, and it caused me to develop severe gastritis. But when I tried to lose weight, I took on too much too quickly, and I went too far. Losing weight became an obsession for me. I was overexercising and wasn't nourishing myself properly. At work, I was always tired and stressed. I reached a point where I was exercising twice a day and hardly eating. I was living in the same house as my family but I barely spent time with them. I couldn't see that I had gone to extremes.

I knew things needed to change when it affected my health.

My lifestyle caused my hemoglobin to drop and I developed Von Willebrand disease, which means your blood doesn't clot properly. I was given a blood transfusion, and that was the wakeup call I needed. After I recovered, I remember thinking, "I don't want to feel like this anymore."

My co-worker, Liliana Santiago, told me about the Thrive Challenge and showed me the Microsteps.

She knew they could be useful for me. I knew I needed to make a change and I wanted to start with nutrition because all of my health problems first started from poor nutrition. I started looking at the Microsteps and picked a few that could help me get back on track.

I made a calendar for myself to stay organized.

I wrote out my exercise routines, and marked one day a week to prepare lunches to take to work. I also downloaded an app that reminds me to drink water throughout the day. My goal right now is to maintain my weight, so my nutrition goals are not about losing weight for me. I'm eating more vegetables and incorporating meat into my diet to improve my hemoglobin. My favorite meal is salmon with creamed spinach and a bean salad!



My hemoglobin started rising again, and I didn't feel as tired anymore.

Changing my diet also put me in better spirits. I had more energy and felt happier. My family even noticed this change and we've started spending more time together, following the Microsteps and planning activities as a family. We go on walks close to our home and sometimes do workout videos we find online.

My focus now is performing better at work and connecting with my family.

Sleep has played a big part, too. I've started meditating, and I try to go to bed by 10:00 p.m. to get seven or eight hours of rest. I turn off the T.V. and listen to a podcast or some relaxing music before bed. My priority is feeling good and taking care of myself.

Today, I feel so grateful.

Being a grateful person opens new doors and allows you to meet new people. It has improved my relationships, made me happier, and has given me a more optimistic mindset. I really feel that I have improved physically and mentally, and finally made the changes I'd needed to make for so long. I'm finally taking care of myself and it feels great.



THRIVE