

Sherron Arnold

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\$5,000 WINNER
Walmart Customer
Bradenton, FL

I came to the U.S. from Jamaica to get away from a very difficult marriage, leaving behind my three children — Anabelle, Chadwin, and Giselle — who are now adults. I lost my eight-year-old daughter, Chantelle, to leukemia. I haven't seen Annabelle and Chadwin or my parents and siblings for 15 years and everytime I think of that, it breaks my heart. My older daughter Giselle comes to visit me sometimes, but I've never even met my granddaughter Chelsea. I'm 61 and I'm a housekeeper in a hospital. It's hard because I'm on my own with no family here and I wasn't taking care of myself.

I'm diabetic with high blood pressure, and I was eating food that wasn't good for me.

I'd have food I used to eat growing up like fried chicken, fried green bananas, and plantains. Then one day I met Sunday Oguntoyinbo, who told me about the Thrive Challenge. He is so inspiring and motivated me to make changes and start the Challenge myself. I was very excited to try it.

I began by eating less meat, more vegetables, and Basmati rice.

I'll make my favorite healthy Jamaican meals now, like goat soup, or ackee (a fruit we eat in Jamaica) and salt fish cooked up with tomatoes and onion. I also make Jamaican chicken soup with spices. I take it into work to share with my coworkers and they always say, "Please bring more!"

I don't have a car so I take the bus to work and walk a lot.

And at work, I'm moving all the time. I do breathing exercises to help lower stress when my heart's pounding. I also like to do deep breathing in bed before I go to sleep. I'll breathe in through my nose, hold my breath, and let it out slowly. I feel so much better. When I went back to the doctor, my blood work was perfect and my blood pressure had gone down.

At home I have two radios and I keep them both on a gospel station.

I never change the channel and I love dancing to the music. It helps me focus and stay positive.



I love The Grace Thrillers and one singer who always motivates me is Jenn Johnson. I'm telling you, her songs touch me to the very core so that I have to praise God; I put my hands in the air and thank him for all that he has done for me.

At work, singing keeps me going.

Patients and nurses will say, "Oh, I can hear you singing." They love it. And I'll sing specially for patients to encourage them. Sometimes they send my boss emails saying how much they appreciate me because I'm so uplifting. I like my job. I've been a humble person from day one and now I have no bad days. I'm always trying to motivate people.

I go to church because I like to sing and dance and worship.

When I'm missing my kids, I speak to my pastor, Keith Miller. He calls me every week and I can confide in him.

Three or four times a week I speak to my kids and tell them how much I love them.

It really helps me. My granddaughter, Chelsea, wants to see me. She says, "Grandma, why are you so far away from us?" My dream is to buy a house so my family can come to America and be with me. I want to be able to turn my head, look behind me, and see them all. My heart needs them.

I've been spending less and saving money.

I used to buy clothes that I didn't need and I don't do that anymore. I save \$500 from each pay check and send \$300 every month back home to my family.

I've saved enough to fly back to Jamaica In December for a visit.

I'm going to be crying as soon as I get through customs. Just imagining being with everyone after so long makes me feel happy and overjoyed.



THRIVE