

# Stefanii Faulkenberry

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**\$5,000 WINNER**  
**Walmart Supercenter #103**  
**Shawnee, OK**

I've always put everyone else before me. I had my daughter, Lynda, when I was 19, and I was a single parent. Now I'm 48 and married. My 20-year-old stepson, Brayden, lives with us. My husband, Daniel, is on disability, and I support our family.

## **My dad died of lung disease.**

Before he died, I was supposed to visit him in Arkansas, but I didn't have gas money. I didn't get to see him. Looking back, I could have borrowed the money and I felt so guilty and sad.

## **I'd lost weight previously, but I gained it back.**

I weighed 260 pounds. I was eating fast food on my way home from work. What I call the inner demon on my shoulder would say, "Just eat, then you'll feel better," and I'd let it win. Then later, I'd have dinner that Daniel had cooked too. I became pre-diabetic — diabetes runs in my family — and I had high blood pressure.

## **Candie Holland, my co-worker, inspired me to start the Thrive Challenge.**

My first Microstep was meal prepping. I'll make salads for the week, and add tuna or chicken. For dinner we might have shrimp tacos or tortilla soup. We just use simple, fresh ingredients like shredded chicken and diced tomatoes. And I'm eating smaller portions.

## **We're connecting at dinner time.**

We'll talk about what's going on with our family, like how Daniel's daughter, Kenzie, who's a dental assistant in Arizona, is buying a new car. And we'll talk about work — Lynda and Brayden also work for Walmart.

## **I'm not tempted to eat fast food.**

Instead of listening to that inner demon, I'll say, "You're not gonna blow this, you don't need those chips!" I just bought new pants and I say to myself, "You look good, keep going." Daniel tells me I look great. I'll say, "You're saying that because you're my husband," and he says, "No, it's true!"

## **I move around all day at work.**

And at home, Daniel and I take our dogs to the dog park. We walk to the mailbox instead of driving. At first, we walked slowly, but now we're taking brisk walks around the neighborhood.

## **I'm getting into the habit of doing 10 minute exercise videos.**

I'll stretch, touch my toes, do twists, and lift up my foot to my knee. I'll tell you, at first it was like my body was yelling: "What are you doing to me?" Now I say to myself, "Great, we're doing it."



## **I've lost 20 pounds and I'm not pre diabetic any more.**

My blood pressure has gone down and the doctor has lowered my medication.

## **To relax, I love knitting and cross stitching.**

I make blankets for gifts. I just finished one for Brayden in deep fall colors. He was surprised and really loved it.

## **Daniel and I are more affectionate.**

We've been married for 16 years and we used to sit on separate couches. He'd watch T.V. and I'd do my cross stitching. And now we'll sit on the same couch and cozy up together. When I'm leaving for work, I'll tell him I love him — unless I'm mad at him! And he'll text me and say, "How's your day going?"

## **On stressful days at work, I listen to Thrive Resets.**

I'll go to the break room or sit in my car and take some deep breaths to let go of the stress. My co-worker, Liz, is doing the Challenge with me. We affirm each other and give each other hugs.

## **I have more energy.**

I work in the pharmacy and a patient came in who was very upset because his diabetic medication was way too expensive. I took the extra time to go on the internet, and I found a coupon he could use with his insurance. It took the medication down from over \$100 to \$25. He was like, "Oh my gosh, thank you. You need a raise!" And we both laughed.

## **We're saving money by not eating out.**

I've been able to start a savings account and pay off a credit card. My husband and I never had a real honeymoon so we're planning to go on a cruise.

## **I have an "I can do this" attitude.**

The Thrive Challenge has changed me tremendously. I've found that if you practice Microsteps, they become positive habits. I've changed my mindset, and I have a better outlook on life.



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