

Stacy Woods

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\$5,000 WINNER
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Guthrie, OK

There's a lot of sitting down at my job at the Academy, so over the past couple years I found myself eating more snacks, gaining weight, and feeling lethargic. By the time I got home, I would just want to lay down. I have two kids, a daughter named Jerry Ann and a son named Deshawn, and I wasn't spending time with them. It was just a vicious cycle. It ended up affecting my kids' behavior, but also my finances and my ability to keep up. I felt overwhelmed.

I had seen a story on the front page of OneWalmart that someone from Shawnee, Oklahoma had won the Thrive Challenge.

I loved that a fellow Okie won. I wasn't used to seeing a fellow small town girl winning something like that. I thought about trying it for myself, but it wasn't until June of last year when I noticed my menstrual cycle had disappeared, and it encouraged me to do something. I'd always been very regular, so I was like, "What the heck is going on?" So I went to my doctor and learned that I'd created problems in my body because of my lethargic lifestyle. That's what did it for me.

We started having a family meeting where we would plan our week.

My seven-year-old son is so picky, and he basically only eats chicken nuggets and tater tots. I want to make sure he's being fed, so I thought sitting down and planning as a family could help. I started asking the kids, "What food do we want to eat? Who's going to cook? Who's going to clean and do what chores?" We'd lay it all out there so I could hold them accountable. And it really helped! It became a bonding time for us. We ended up starting a family game night, too. We play the Game of Life, Jumanji, and Skip-Bo.

I bought a Fitbit, and my friends and I compete with each other.

It's our way of encouraging each other! As a single mom, it's easy to find yourself in a hole with no way out. But having the support of those around you to encourage you makes all the difference. I also got a bicycle and I ride around with my kids on nice days after we get home from school and work. But the biggest thing that's gotten me moving is bringing home a puppy! We were at work one day, and there was a push cart outside and these girls had free puppies. Their farm dog had a litter and their mom wanted them to find homes for the dogs. I ended up bringing one home with me! She was a bundle of energy and brought the kids and I so much joy. Now, when I get home from work, it's a race for who can grab their bike and scooter first to go riding, or who can catch the puppy first so we can go on walks.



When I got to my 14th hot streak day of the Thrive Challenge, I felt like everything was clicking.

Seeing those fire symbols reminded me that I was doing this consistently for 14 days. I've tried things in the past but I've never been consistent, so I was excited that this was working for me. I asked my kids, "Have y'all seen a change?" And they said, "Yeah. You're cool now. And you have more energy. You seem like your old self." And I just thought, "This is it. This was what I needed."

I'm trying to teach my kids to be thankful for what we have, and to be good stewards of the resources we have.

I don't want my kids to think we're poor. We're definitely not rich, but I want to teach them how to make good choices and develop good money skills, and more importantly to maintain good physical health. I don't want to lose weight for the sake of losing weight. I want to show them that I'm losing weight so I can see them next year and in five years from now and ten years from now. I want to share positive body image with them and show them what it looks like to take care of yourself. Today, I'm grateful that I can spend quality time with them and enjoy those moments. Taking the puppy for a walk, chasing her in the backyard, walking around selling Girl Scout cookies -- it's all been a lot of fun.



THRIVE