

# Crystal Scheeff

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**\$5,000 WINNER**  
**Sam's Club #6302**  
**Oakwood Village, OH**

I'm a single mom with a five-year-old son, Jayden. My mom died when he was a month old — she had cystic fibrosis — and when Jayden was 18 months old, his dad passed away from lung cancer. Things have not been easy. I'm the oldest of three children, my mom was ill when I was growing up, and I had to learn to do things for myself at a very young age. Now, I'm 38 and I have a new man in my life, Kirk, but I wasn't happy. I felt exhausted and I was eating my feelings — I'd skip breakfast, and have cookies and Pop-Tarts instead of proper meals. Jayden would want to go to the park, and I wouldn't feel up to it so I'd sit in a chair on the porch while he played by himself. I knew inside there was a better way to live.

## **I decided to try the Thrive Challenge and found it a great support system.**

The first thing I did was go out and buy a lot of fruit, yogurt, and oat milk. I started making smoothies every morning to nourish my brain. And I stopped getting "foggy brain" half way through my day.

## **I'm making great meals like my special baked chicken with shredded parmesan cheese.**

We'll have it with pasta and a side salad. I love cooking and I'm making Sunday dinners again, which I hadn't been doing: fish or chicken with vegetables and fresh baked biscuits. My sister, Cassandra, will come over with her kids. You smell the good food in the air, then sit down and eat together. Just knowing that we're all together and there for each other makes me feel warm inside and puts a smile on my face.

## **Doing morning yoga and stretching gets me energized for the day.**

I remembered that when I was a teenager, I'd do yoga and it would make me feel good. Now, I'm loving it again. I play relaxing music and guide myself into a meditation. It helps my mind settle down.

## **My son and I have "dance-outs" to reggae and dancehall music.**

We clear out a space and he gets really into it. If mommy wants to stop and sit down, he's like, "No, mommy, one more song." And he keeps me going. I have to copy his dance moves, then he copies what I'm doing. It brings a lot of joy to both of us; we'll be laughing the whole time.



## **We go to Euclid Beach on Lake Erie to enjoy the air and the breeze.**

It's always a new experience because one day we'll have a nice peaceful walk, just enjoying the breeze and the sounds of the birds. And the next time it'll be a scavenger hunt with Jayden finding cool things to show me like sticks, rocks, and seashells.

## **I'm getting back into art — drawing, painting, photography and ceramics. I do it all.**

Jayden and I are painting together. I paint trees and skies and mountains; he paints dinosaurs, crazy animals and dragons. Art is a great way of relieving stress that I hadn't done in a long time, because I'd felt it was too time-consuming. But actually I've found that when I'm painting I'm not so worried about all those things that have to get done. I know there's plenty of time in the day.

## **I'm doing a program in business management and leadership.**

I have ADHD and learning has always been hard. But I've found that when it's something I'm really interested in, I enjoy it and it's easier. Next, I want to go back to school and get my bachelor's degree in business because I like being challenged. I would love to move up to management.

## **My dream is to go on a family vacation.**

I've never been out of state and my goal is to take the family somewhere like the Virgin Islands or Florida where there's nice weather and we can try different food.

## **My mood is better; I feel good about myself.**

## **I have days that are good and days that are bad, but there are more good days now.**

I tell myself that I am the person I am today despite everything I've been through and that I am a force of nature and nobody can hold me back.



THRIVE