

# Archana Sharma

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**\$5,000 WINNER**  
**Walmart Supercenter #2277**  
**Clovis, CA**

I am a 33-year-old single mom with a 10-year-old son, Henry. I moved to America from India with my husband. We separated four years ago, and I felt totally alone. I had to leave his house. Moving to a different country and taking care of my son has been really hard. I had to learn to speak English and I have no family here. I'm a very quiet person and I didn't share what was going on for me. I was so worried and I didn't know how to manage money.

**I was behind on my rent and couldn't afford a car so I was using a bicycle to get around.**

I felt stressed. I couldn't afford to buy my son clothes and toys. I'm a vegetarian, but we'd eat pizza and packaged microwave dinners. I had high cholesterol and the doctor put me on medicine.

**I got my job at Walmart and people were so nice.**

They told me, "You can do it." One day I was crying and told my co-worker, Valerie. She was very kind and said the Thrive Challenge could help me, so I downloaded the Thrive app.

**Managing money is getting easier.**

I used to spend money on unnecessary things like clothes and I would have to borrow money from friends. I made a budget and stick to it, and I don't need to borrow money now. Whenever I get my paycheck, I put \$100 aside and I'm saving \$200 a month. I can pay my rent and I have money to put away now. I stopped eating out, which is saving money. And I can pay my bills on time. It feels so good. I have a rule that I buy Henry one toy a month — he's a kid, so it's important — and last month I bought him a Roblox game.

**God sent me an angel in my friend Rosa.**

She works at Walmart too and supports me, she's really helped me through the tough times. Rosa lends me her car in the day because she works at night.

**I started cooking every morning.**

I make Indian food, curry with lentils, potatoes, peas, and cauliflower, or tofu and yellow rice. Henry and I are a team. I'll cook and he'll do the dishes. We have dinner at the table and share about our days. He told me how kids were bullying him because they thought he was chubby. I told him, "You are a very handsome, smart boy and a good human being and you're fine the way you are." I teach him how to be strong and they've stopped bullying him.



**When I get home from work, I clean my house, and then I focus on my son.**

I make sure he does his homework. Before, he wasn't good at studying, but now because I spend more time with him, his grades are better.

**I'm connecting with my family. Every day I talk on FaceTime to my mom in India.**

They worry about me, but I tell them I'm doing good now and she's so happy because things are getting better for me.

**Henry and I dance together.**

We put on music and get moving. Henry's favorite song is "Love Me Like You Do" by Ellie Goulding. I love my Indian music, like Badshah and Ammy Virk. We sweat a lot and laugh a lot — it's play time for us both. We also go to the park, where he'll play on the swings and the slide and we chase each other.

**Every day I meditate for five or ten minutes.**

I say affirmations to myself, like, "I'm a good human being," and "This is going to be the best day." Sometimes I pamper myself. If I feel I look a little dull, I'll give myself a facial.

**I want to buy a car, and my big dream is to buy my own house.**

It's really important to me because no one will be able to kick me out of it — to have something that no one can kick me out of.

**My cholesterol is back to normal, I don't need medicine and I feel so much better.**

I'm going to school and studying business analytics. I used to have no plans or goals, but now, Microstep by Microstep, I'm achieving things and I'm 100 percent sure I'm going to have a super good future.



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