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Before I started the Thrive Challenge, I had a lot of self-doubt. It showed in many ways. I doubted that I could achieve my goals; I struggled with committing to doing what I needed to do to make changes. I'm 28, and my partner, Jeremiah, and I have three kids: Syrus, who's eight, four-year-old Calliope, and two-year-old Novalee. I had no self-confidence, and really struggled with loving myself. I felt stuck and I experienced overall sadness. I was longing for a better life for myself. I was doing a lot of stress eating. And I weighed 350 pounds.

I downloaded the Thrive app in January this year, and began with food Microsteps.

I'm food prepping. And instead of just grabbing food, I listen to my body. I ask myself, "Am I really hungry?" I only drink water and I make sure I take breaks at work to hydrate. I focus on eating meat, veggies, and fruits. I like meat and cheese roll-ups, with pickles and olives. For dinner, I'll make simple stir-fries with chicken, broccoli, bell pepper, and onion.

Learning about portion sizes has been a huge stepping stone.

I use smaller plates and bowls, which helps me not to overeat. I've learned to stop eating when I'm satisfied and I'm not over full. I'm also enjoying healthy snacks, like hummus and raw veggies. For a sweet snack, dark chocolate hummus with strawberries is a really good option.

One Microstep I loved was finding an accountability partner.

My co-worker, and bestie, Cheryl Perkins, has been that person. We're there for each other for support with all our work and personal situations. We have our breaks and meals together and discuss meal preps we're planning for each upcoming week. We remind each other about our Thrive Challenges.

I'm moving my body every day.

I get 20,000 steps at work. And outside of work, I'm spending time outside every day with my kids. We play in the yard, and we go to the park.

When I get home from work, I put my phone down.

I focus on my time with my kids. I've also started turning the T.V. off everyday, so we can spend time together. We're all in a better mood. Thrive Resets are great to watch when I need a minute to myself to just breathe. And I set aside time to do yoga — it's relaxing and helps me feel less stressed and recharge after all the work I've put in during the day.



Daily affirmations help me stay positive.

I really like this one: "Today is filled with opportunities." It reminds me that we all make mistakes and sometimes go off track, but each day gives us a new opportunity to do better and learn from our mistakes. This is the other affirmation I say to myself: "I am deserving of love, respect, and kindness, and I give these things to myself every day." This has been so important to me, because I never really thought I did deserve those things. I feel less embarrassed. I'm learning to love myself and be kind to myself, and I'm more confident.

My boundaries are improving.

I'm managing my time better. I schedule time to do things I enjoy, like volunteering with my kids' schools. I love that I'm able to be more involved with their education and activities.

I made the big leap in April and bought a house!

This was huge for me, because I lived in an apartment for 11 years, and I always wanted a house for my kids, so they could play in their own yard. With Thrive Microsteps, I was able to make a financial plan each month. I balanced my bills and income, I set a budget, opened a savings account and started putting money away from each check. I feel more in charge of my finances and able to make better decisions.

The Thrive Challenge is amazing — it's really changed my life.

I've lost 58 pounds. For the first time in nine years, when I got pregnant with my first child, I'm under 300 pounds. It has been such a great achievement, and I am motivated to keep going. I used to take medication for bad migraines and overall body pain, but I no longer have to take anything — the pain has gone.



THRIVE