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My biggest challenge was dealing with my teenage daughter's behavior patterns after she was diagnosed with anxiety. Devin's now 16, and it's been scary and traumatic. Never did I think this would be happening with my child. I was slipping into depression and dealing with all that on top of my struggle with obesity. I weighed 328 pounds, my body ached, and I had a blood clotting disorder. One day I went to the doctor with sharp pains in my chest and he said I was experiencing heart palpitations. I'm 45 and he told me if I didn't get a handle on my stress, I was on the verge of having a stroke or a heart attack.

I needed to change to stay alive.

I have a 14-year-old son, Dallas, a 23-year-old son, De'Mari, a two-year-old granddaughter, De'Miyah, and my partner, Khari, who all need me to be here for them. I'd read about the Thrive Challenge at work and decided to download the app in April 2022.

Connection Microsteps are helping me and my daughter communicate.

We were constantly butting heads, but we learned that when things are stressful, we can do a Thrive Reset. Simple breathing techniques have helped us strengthen our relationship. I learned that we can walk away from a heated conversation. I'll say, "Baby let's take a step back and breathe, so we can listen to each other." I sometimes make lists of the heated issues so I can understand Devin's feelings and support her.

Walking around the block and meditating helps me regulate my emotions.

It takes me from an angry state, so I can try to see where my daughter is coming from. Then we can set aside time to talk calmly. It helps because I don't do as much emotional eating.

Working out is truly my release.

Movement is a big part of my life. I do one hour HIIT (High-intensity interval training) sessions in the week, and on Saturday I work out with my Fit Fam (our fitness community). Our trainers push us to do our best and feel good about our body image. It's very supportive. I also walk more every day and I do stretching and yoga.

I've changed my diet.

I began with Microsteps like weekly meal prepping on my days off. And I do intermittent fasting. I make baked chicken tenderloins with broccoli, cheese, and peppers. It's a quick meal that I can eat all week and it's so flavorful. I also make steak tacos with keto tortillas and I eat a lot of spring mix salad with tuna fish or chicken cooked in the airfryer. And I like to drink sparkling water.



I've lost 30 pounds so far.

My energy has increased, and my knees and legs don't hurt anymore. I can keep up with my teens when we're in the mall without being winded and embarrassed. I can hold my granddaughter, De'Miyah, run around with her, play with her on the swings, and go down the slide with her.

My faith is part of my daily routine.

I pray, listen to podcasts or to relaxing music. I also read and I repeat affirmations. One thing I'm most proud of is that I finally learned to take time for myself, doing things I love, like nature walks. Just listening to birds chirp takes me back to my childhood when everything was so simple and carefree. It brings me peace of mind.

The best change has been building a better relationship with my daughter.

But I'm also less stressed at work. The breathing exercises help me have a good work life balance. I'm able to come to work with a good attitude. I listen attentively to my associates and colleagues and help them through their struggles. And I've introduced them all to Thrive.

At my last physical, my doctor told me I was no longer pre-diabetic.

He asked me what I'd been doing because he said I wasn't carrying that distressed look on my face anymore. He reduced my blood thinners, which is amazing.

I can't believe how far I've come.

It's a lifestyle transformation. And as I continue with Thrive, I see nothing but more positive results coming, that will last a lifetime.



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