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My mother passed away a year ago after a lengthy battle with cancer and it was the most difficult experience of my life. I gained a lot of weight, I weighed 220 pounds, and I knew it was going to be hard to lose it without support. I'd eat whatever I wanted — like candy before bed. I'm 42, and my wife, Valerie, and I have a beautiful four-year-old daughter, Ava, but earlier this year, I was in a bad spot physically and mentally. My peer, Coach Amy, encouraged me to download the Thrive app.

First, I focused on changing the way I was eating with Microsteps like food prepping.

Now, almost all of my meals consist of healthy fats, fruits, vegetables, and protein. I keep it as simple as possible. I might have canned sardines for dinner or eggs. And I eat a lot of fruit, like blueberries and raspberries. If we go out to eat, I usually get a small steak and broccoli. Overall, my appetite has decreased. I actually look forward to eating healthy meals, and I like the way my body feels.

Getting into a consistent routine of healthy eating really works.

Even if I do have a cheat meal, it doesn't derail the progress I have made. I've lost 50 pounds, and I feel unbelievable.

Moving every day has become a priority.

I started taking Microsteps, doing a little something each day, like a short walk lifting light weights or taking an early morning or late-night bike ride. I also downloaded a home workout app. The small changes I saw in my body — and on the scale — helped fuel me to continue with my Challenge. Results breed results. And as I lost weight, working out felt less like a chore and more enjoyable.

I take Ava to the park and we have fun together.

She loves the "big girls" swing and the slide. I also walk around our neighborhood with my family almost every night. I have much more energy, I can play with Ava now without getting tired.

Money Microsteps are helping me make better financial decisions.

I'm saving with my 401K, I've paid off some of my student debt, and I've started a college fund for Ava. We're spending less because we've cut out fast food. Investing in my family's future is changing our lives for the better. The Challenge has lit a fire under me in the best way possible.

My sleep has improved tremendously.

I'm using Microsteps like putting electronics away an hour before I go to bed. Instead of scrolling on my phone, I'm reading interesting books, like *The Total Money Makeover* by Dave Ramsey, and I'm learning a lot. I'm getting deeper sleep and I wake up with more energy.



My confidence has improved.

When I look in the mirror, I'm happy with the new me I see. Each day I write down "progress, not perfection" on a post-it note and put it in my wallet. It's something small that helps me focus and stay positive. Also, I used to have knee pain, which has gone completely — I can bend, run, and twist.

Doing the Microsteps has helped everything in my life fall into place.

Once I started things that made the biggest impact, like eating well and getting my health and finances in order, everything else got better too. I've become a better friend, husband, father, and manager. I'm more present and available for my co-workers.

I'm connecting more with my family.

We went on a wonderful trip to California with my in-laws. Disneyland was the highlight and it did not disappoint. Experiencing everything through my daughter's eyes made it so special. I was able to slow down and truly enjoy every moment with her. She really loves Minnie Mouse! And I had the energy to go on rides with her — Ava's favorite is Thunder Mountain.

The Thrive Challenge truly changed my life.

It's just what I needed to get me out of that sad place and it put me on a new path to happiness. I want to try harder for everyone in my life — and for myself. Looking at family pictures from our California trip, I knew I was a changed man, both mentally and physically. I had a bigger smile and a smaller waist — and I could not be happier about both.



THRIVE