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I used to let negative thoughts take control of me, which wasn't working. I'm 40 and I didn't want to be that way anymore. I'd get stressed and I'd get consumed by my anxiety — like worrying that I wouldn't get my work finished. My previous ways were not working for me. I just was over it. Also, in 2021, I had a bout with cervical cancer. Thankfully they caught it early and I had surgery that was successful. But I wasn't paying attention to what I was eating — there was a lot of fast food. I wanted to improve my health.

I heard about the Thrive Challenge reading a pamphlet in the break room.

I found the stories really inspiring. And then later, I met some folks who'd won the Challenge and I decided to download the app.

The first step I took was to start meditating.

Taking the time every day to just slow down and breathe, I realized how easily I can change my thoughts! So when a negative thought emerges, I can counter it with a positive one (or four!)

I've learned to be positive, and it does take work.

I exercise regularly. That helps me tremendously, and it's the biggest game changer I know. It helps me clear my mind, it helps me sleep better, and it gives me more energy.

I'm moving more.

My endurance is getting better. I can run three miles now; I used to have to walk some of it. I have a big goal — I want to run a marathon! Long term, I want to run the Boston Marathon, but I have to complete another one first to qualify for it. There's a local race in the fall, so that's what I'm aiming for right now.

I'm drinking lots of water.

I got one of those water bottles that has the times stamped on it. My skin's clearing up and I have more energy. I also try to eat healthily during my workweek, so I can relax a little on the weekend.

In the morning, I always make a smoothie.

It's an easy way to get the right nutrients, and I rarely have time for breakfast. I eat lunch with my mom. She lives near my work so I visit her and we spend a little time connecting.



My husband Matthew and I cook dinner together.

Our favorite recipe is Greek chicken with zucchini and peppers. It's nice to have that time with each other because we work different shifts.

Matthew and I actually met working at Walmart!

He doesn't work with me anymore; he's a welder now. We've always been close, but we're connecting more. We spend our days off together, we'll go shopping, and go to the movies.

I'm working on finances.

Matthew and I created a budget. It's been enlightening to see where my money goes and how much I've saved. Not eating out means I'm saving about 400 dollars a month!

My nighttime routine helps me get better rest.

My devices don't come in the bedroom. And because I exercise, I fall asleep as soon as my head hits the pillow. Reading helps me get a good night's sleep too. Right now I'm reading a novel called Happy Place by Emily Henry.

Gratitude is everything. It's life-changing.

I have my gratitude journal by my bed and I write three things I'm grateful for every night, like my black cats, Gotham and Salem. My mindset has changed. When I feel negative thoughts creeping in, I start listing those things I am grateful for. There's always something to be grateful for: your pet, your family, the fact that you woke up healthy, and that your shoelace isn't broken!

I gravitate toward positive people and things that make me happy.

The Challenge has changed my life. It's made me more motivated. My mindset has changed and I'm much more positive. I hope my smile and sunshine can brighten up other people's days.



THRIVE