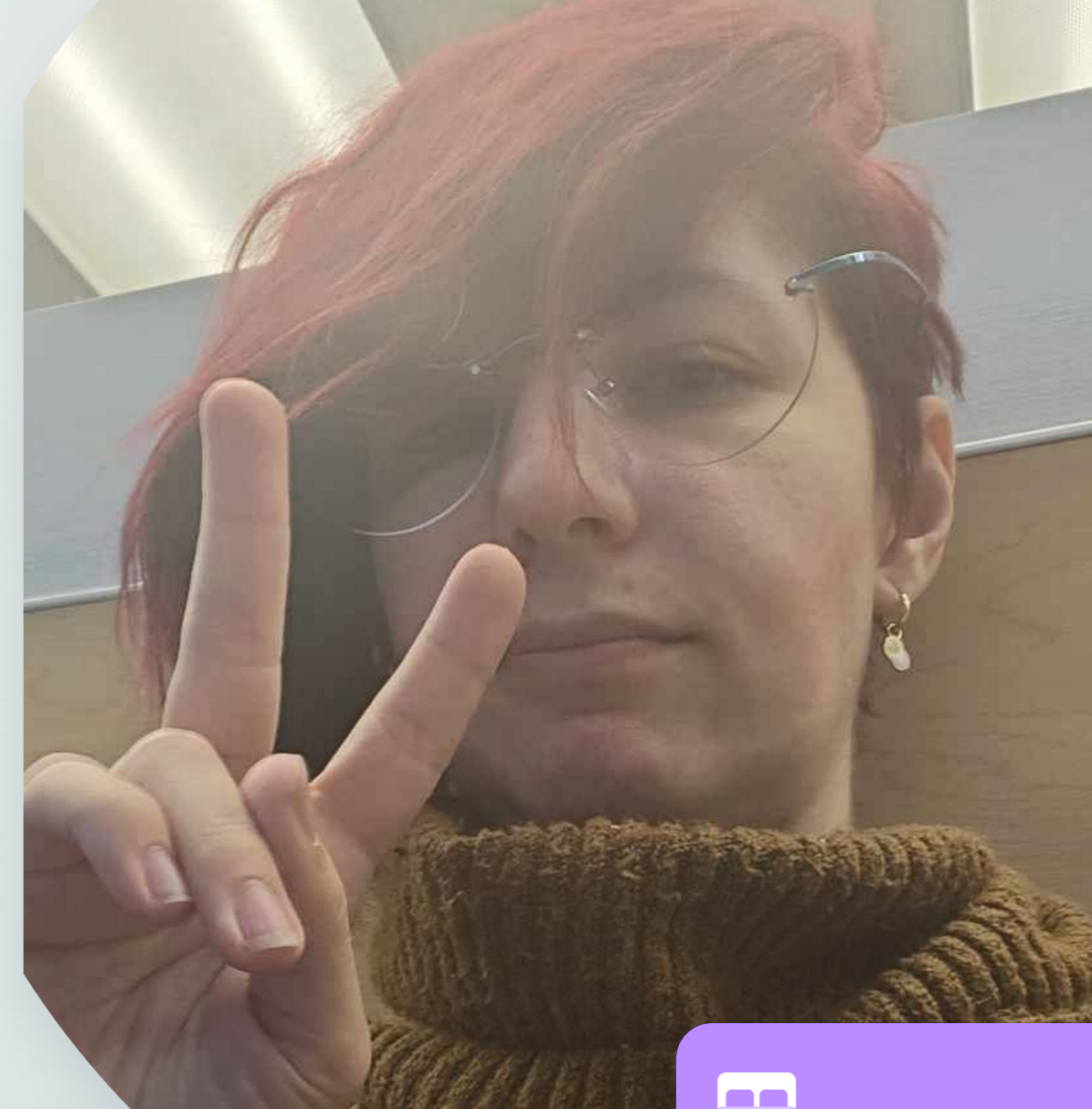




\$5,000 WINNER

Jesse Swanson

Walmart Store #1843
Mcminnville, OR



Microstep

In the evening I do some deep breathing. I take a warm shower, which helps me relax, and I'll have a cup of tea or cocoa.



Outcome

"I'm taking time for myself to relax."

I live with my mom, who's disabled, and I'm her main caregiver. I drive her to appointments, come home at lunch to make sure she eats, and take care of the house. I'm 29, I had a lot of responsibility, and I felt like I was dealing with everything on my own. My fiancé, Jarvis, currently lives in Canada, so I don't see him very often. I was also studying to get my certification as a pharmacy technician, but it was hard to focus. I wasn't sleeping well and I felt tired all the time.

A co-worker inspired me to download the Thrive app.

I started with sleep Microsteps. In the evening I do some deep breathing. I take a warm shower, which helps me relax, and I'll have a cup of tea or cocoa. I'll sit with Mom and pet Bandit, our Calico kitty, and I'll call Jarvis to catch up. I began going to bed earlier. Before sleep, I write down three things I'm grateful for and do some journaling, then I read a book.

I'm sleeping better and I don't have brain fog in the morning.

I have a little time to myself to make coffee, grab breakfast, and feed the cat before helping my mom get up. I used to try to study at the same time as doing housework, but now I tackle one small thing at a time, like doing the dishes or cleaning one room, then I take a break. I became more productive, and I stopped feeling overwhelmed about everything that had to get done. It became easier to do my job and focus on my schoolwork.

I used to think I had to do everything myself, and now I ask for support.

I used to be a digital shopper, and when I moved to the pharmacy, I was welcomed with open arms by my colleagues. When I doubted myself, they reminded me that I'm smart and capable. People also helped me adjust my shifts so I could take my mom to appointments.

I got a promotion and I'm now a certified pharmacy technician.

This accomplishment means the world to me, as I had to pass a lot of tests. Sitting in the room doing my big certification exam, my heart was fluttering. Mom and I kept checking the website until the results were posted, and four days later we found out I had passed with a high score. All that effort had paid off and I cried; I was so happy. I love my job.

To celebrate, my mom and I went on a three-day vacation at the coast.

We had breakfast on the hotel balcony overlooking the ocean and had delicious salmon chowder for dinner. We talked about how truly grateful we are for each other.

In my new position, I use Microsteps all the time, like pausing to breathe.

A Microstep I like: If something will take two minutes or less, do it right away, such as putting a prescription in the system or sending a fax to a doctor's office.

I'm carving out time to relax and have fun.

I always said I wanted to get together with friends and never did anything about it. My friend Nicole recently sat me down and said, "Pull out your schedule, we are going out on a date, we're going to see a movie!" We went to see the new Deadpool & Wolverine movie, and I was so happy I said yes — it was amazing.

Now I'm feeling more calm and well-rested, my whole life is better.

My mom and I are both less stressed, and her health has been improving. She's gone from using a walker to a cane, so she's more independent. We're connecting and having heart-to-heart conversations. I'm smiling more and I feel like I have more control over my life. I remind myself that I always have support, and I don't feel like I have to face the world alone anymore.