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My biggest challenge was making time for myself. My husband, Lonnie, and I have three teenage children. And as a mom I always put my family and my children's needs and wants before mine. My knees hurt, my legs and my back hurt, and I wasn't sleeping well. I'd been trying to lose weight since my daughter was born in 2011, but I'd always give up.

I lost my grandmother last year and I lost all my motivation.

Then my mother was diagnosed with diabetes. She's fine now, but diabetes runs in the family and I was scared. It was a big wake-up call. I turned 37 this year on February 12. I weighed 243 pounds on my birthday. I decided I had to change so I downloaded the Thrive app.

I started with the Microstep about making a choice to move your body each day.

I began doing step aerobics at home. I gradually moved up from the beginners level to the "expert" level! I started working out on the stair-stepper at the gym and doing weight training. There were times when I didn't feel motivated, but I thought back to how scared I was when my mom got sick and I pushed through.

Next, I focused on food — I eat more chicken, fish, vegetables, and fruit.

For breakfast, I'll have overnight oats with frozen blueberries, stevia and almond milk. One of my quick go-to dinners is taco bowls. It's basically a taco salad without the shell, made with grilled chicken, shredded lettuce, black beans, a pinch of fat-free cheese, and cilantro. I top it off with salsa.

I'm food prepping.

Before I start my week I prepare my meals and put them in containers to last three days. It means I'm not rushed at work trying to find something quick to eat.

As I started losing weight, I noticed that my feet and my knees were less painful.

After work, I have more energy to do things with my family. With my own hard work and the support of my family, I've lost 60 pounds and I'm pain-free.

My favorite Microstep is connecting with myself or someone else in a meaningful way.

I check in on my children and my husband to see how their day is going. I ask them how they're feeling; and in the evening, I ask them to tell me one positive thing they did for themselves. I focus on what I've done that's positive as well. That helps me to appreciate everything I've achieved. And I set goals for the next day.



Getting out in nature helps me relax.

We go on family hikes at the state park, and take our time on the trails. We collect rocks and shells and unplug from everything. We go to the lake, and have picnics. We'll take our kayak so we can paddle out and fish or just enjoy being on the water. This summer we did our first family river floating trip. Making memories with everyone is very fulfilling.

Once a week we have a family game night.

We'll play Trouble, Monopoly, or our giant Jenga set. Or we'll do crafts; we like to paint and decorate T-shirts using Apple Barrel paint in a spray bottle.

I'm a Girl Scout troop leader, and my daughter and I helped to clean up the Trinity River.

It felt so nice to make a beautiful river even more beautiful by cleaning it up.

Sleep has become a priority.

I put my devices away at least an hour before bedtime. I take a shower, do my new nightly skincare routine, and either read a book or talk to my family. I fall asleep easier and I'm sleeping better.

I'm supporting my co-workers and encouraging them to join me on my journey.

My friends, Mecca, Carletta, Olga, Natalie and Raquel, say my journey has inspired them to be more healthy. I want all of my friends and family that I care about to take the Challenge!

I feel fulfilled and peaceful.

My heart is full with all the positive things I've accomplished in the last year. Thrive has helped me see the world in a different light. I feel truly blessed to have a great job, a great family, and great friends. I wake up in the mornings refreshed and ready to start another adventure.



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