

Eduardo Romero

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\$5,000 WINNER
Customer
Phoenix, AZ

A year ago, I was living with my parents in Juárez, Mexico. I was working in a furniture store, not earning much, and feeling depressed. So I decided to step out of my comfort zone and moved to Phoenix, Arizona for a better life. It was the hardest decision I've ever made. I found a great job with a bank, but I had no friends. I was feeling really sad and lonely, missing my family, and my city. I was living alone and I had a lot of anxiety. I was overweight and addicted to cigarettes. I wasn't cooking and was eating fast food like McDonald's and Chipotle. I'm 28 and one morning I decided to stop the self-pity, enough was enough, I had to do something different.

I started cooking for myself.

I'll make chicken or fish on the stove with veggies like broccoli. And I'll prepare salads to take to work. I wouldn't say I'm a good cook yet, but I'm learning and doing my best.

The company I work for offers counseling, so I started having therapy.

I find that just talking about my feelings is so helpful. My therapist recommended talking a lot to my family in Mexico, so I call home almost every day. Connecting with them sounds simple, but it really calms me down.

I'm connecting with my co-workers and I've had the pleasure of making new friends.

They've invited me to their homes for barbecues and we'll go out for dinner after work. I joined a couple of groups of people from Mexico. We have meetings and hang out together.

It's great because it gives me a sense of home, being able to speak Spanish, my native language, and I feel comfortable with them.

I go to the gym every single day after work.

I'll work out on the StairMaster and combine cardio with weight lifting. I've also quit smoking — oh man, it was really, really, hard but I've finally done it. And it feels great.



I'm studying for an M.B.A. in finance because I want to grow and advance my career.

It's hard, because I study and do my homework for hours after work and going to the gym. But I decided to do it because it will give me greater opportunity to eventually move into a management position, which is a big goal of mine. It's something I think I'd be good at because of my character and leadership qualities.

By cutting out fast food, and just buying essentials, I'm saving money.

It's important for me because I'm paying for my master's degree, which is a lot — and I send \$300 dollars a month to help out my family in Mexico. They're my biggest supporters and they're really proud of me making the decision to leave and make a better life. I'm also saving to go back and visit them for a weekend. And my other big goal is to buy a house for myself in the next couple of years. Hopefully I'll meet someone and will have a home where we can raise a family.

I listen to motivational podcasts and watch videos.

The author and ultramarathon runner, David Goggins, inspires me. He has a really cool story and talks about how he lost weight and changed his life.

I've lost over 40 pounds and I talk to myself a lot about the great strides I'm making.

I tell myself I'm growing and advancing physically and in my career. And I motivate myself to continue working towards my goals. I feel like I'm getting there step by step. I have more energy now than ever before and I'm feeling great about where my life is heading.



THRIVE