

Stephen Waltrip

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\$5,000 WINNER

**Sam's Club #8163
Columbia, MO**

Before the Challenge I had no consistency in my life. There was no exercising. It was work, work, work. So I was eating out of stress and boredom. I had no motivation or energy. I was not making time for myself. I realized I needed to take my life back. In April, I moved and took a job that would give me a set schedule. And then I started the Challenge.

My diet was the first thing I needed to change.

I thought, "OK, I drink a lot of soda — let's cut out soda and drink more water. Let's cut down on carbs." So that's what I did. I've quit eating sweets, reduced carbs, and quit sugary drinks. Some of my favorite recipes include spaghetti squash and manicotti lasagna with no pasta shells. It's really good. Now I no longer have to worry about being fatigued or tired after eating carb-loaded foods.

I also started working out six days a week.

I've lost 27 pounds in two months. My goal is to lose more weight, learn new meals to cook, and be able to consistently jog at least two miles in under 20 minutes. There are a lot of 5K charity fundraisers here, and I want to get more involved in that.

It's made an impact with my family and friends.

They'll send messages like, "You look so much happier now in your photos." So that's been great, having supportive people reach out. Their positivity really does help me keep going farther and doing more. I now spend a lot more time with my family, too. We go on bike rides and walks, and cook and travel together.



My mindset is much more positive.

I'm not anxious anymore. I'm not depressed like I was. Before, I was sitting at home. Now I'm out and about, going to the park or on trails. I'm not just seeing myself live my life, I'm seeing other people with the same goals live their lives. Now I take the time to recognize the situation and not react too quickly. I'm calm, cool, and relaxed. Now if someone asks me something, it's about, OK, what can we do? Let's do it together.

With the Challenge, I'm retraining my mind and body.

I'm creating new habits. Do you have something you're trying to work toward? Do you need to work on a new mindset? Do you need to work on your body? Whatever you need to work on, Thrive can help you with it. They have resources, they have the Challenge, and they're there for you.

