

Jason Larson

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\$5,000 WINNER
Distribution Center #6094
Bentonville, AR

Two years ago, I fell into a deep depression. My wife and I divorced and she moved to Virginia with our three kids. I already had a drinking problem and started to drink even more. I'd get through a bottle of tequila a day. I had high blood pressure and felt terrible. I was having suicidal thoughts and realized I couldn't quit drinking on my own. I live with my brother, Kyle, and he supported me in getting myself into rehab. The first few days at the treatment center were rough, but I had a lot of therapy and learned great coping skills.

I've been sober for 10 months.

I go to Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.) meetings, and I downloaded the Thrive app to get more support. I'm 36, and I know that this sobriety journey is for the rest of my life.

Going to the gym is an absolute godsend.

I started working out when I was in treatment and now I exercise every day, lifting weights and walking on the treadmill. It helps me clear my head — it's my form of meditation. I can honestly say I've never left the gym in a bad mood.

I fly out to see my kids every chance I get.

My ex-wife and I co-parent very well and we're friends. The kids come to stay with me and we're bonding so much more because I'm focusing completely on them. This summer, we swam in the Elk River. One day we went to a diamond mine to dig for crystals, and we saw some caves. On rainy days we did puzzles together. Being sober just makes being a dad a hundred times better.

Everything revolves around my kids right now.

I want to be the best example I can by taking care of myself and showing them that, through hard work and dedication, you can have a great life.

To relax, I love swimming and hanging out with my close friends.

Jessica, who introduced me to the Thrive Challenge and her husband, Kirkland, are a big part of my life. Their kids call me Uncle Jason. We'll go swimming and every now and again we'll rent a raft and float down the river. It gives me a good feeling being part of an extended family because I can't be with my own children all the time.



My girlfriend, Megan, is a great support — she's wonderful and being with her is effortless.

We go bowling, we go to the movies, and play board games with her 15-year-old daughter. She encourages me to go to my A.A. meetings, which is great, but I don't need any persuasion to go. I love going and I chair our meetings four times a week.

I've lowered my blood pressure.

My doctor told me that if I stay on my current path, it's very possible that I'll be able to lower, if not eliminate, my medications.

I'm saving money because I'm not buying alcohol or fast food.

I'm putting money away to take my mom on a vacation to Lakenheath in England, where I was born. We'd love to visit family members we haven't seen in decades.

I feel great and I wake up so grateful to be sober.

I'm thankful for the wonderful support that I have. My dad is actually a recovering alcoholic — he's been sober for 36 years — and he's so happy for me. The whole family's happy and proud of me.

I have a positive outlook at work and my perspective has changed.

I'm hoping to move up in the company and become an area manager in charge of all the unloaders. Also, I want people to inspire people who are struggling with addiction so they know that, by getting sober and putting one foot in front of the other, they can completely turn their lives around.



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