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\$5,000 WINNER
Return Center #9153,
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When it came to eating, I had no discipline and I gained weight. Both my boys — J.J. who's 14, and 12-year-old Luis — play sports, and I coach basketball and baseball, but I had no energy. We're always on the road, going to games and tournaments, and we ate out all the time. We'd have enchiladas, cheeseburgers, and pizza.

I was feeling a lot of stress.

My brother passed away during COVID. We were close, and now, as well as dealing with my own grief, my wife Katherine and I are helping his kids — my nephews — get through the grieving process.

Then in December of last year I was diagnosed with type 2 diabetes.

I'm only 48, and it was an eye-opener. I said, "Man, I have to take care of myself for my boys." On the Thrive app, I read about a guy who had diabetes. Bill LeTexier had changed his life by taking Microsteps. I really related to his story, and I started the Thrive Challenge.

We stopped eating out.

To help with my new diet, I saw a nutritionist. We're cooking as a family and we all love grilling. We'll put chicken, shrimp, or steak on the grill and play basketball while it's cooking. I've cut down on red meat. I really like steak, but instead of a whole one I'll have half or just a small piece. One trick I've learned is eating off smaller plates. I also quit eating candy from the vending machine at work. I'll have an apple instead.

I used to run, but I'd feel tired, and then I wouldn't do anything for a few days.

A fitness trainer I met on a cruise gave me this advice: Just walk for 45 minutes instead. You'll feel great and you won't have to recuperate. So that's what I do now — fast walking for three miles a day.

Katherine and I walk the trails near our house.

We appreciate nature — there are so many beautiful birds, like red cardinals. While we're out, we meet people and talk to them. Also, every few days I do some weight lifting at home. Katherine said, "Babe, you're losing a lot of weight!" She's joined me and we're on this journey together.

I have more energy for my boys.

We'll kick a ball and run around in the backyard. It feels amazing.

When I'm stressed at work, I watch Resets on the Thrive app.

There's always time to watch one because they're only 60 seconds long. I especially like the one with waterfalls; it's very calming.



We pray as a family, which gives me strength.

Every morning I ask for good health for all of us. Prayer is a great reminder that we're not perfect and that God is always there to protect us. We go to church every Sunday and J.J. is going to be confirmed in April. I'm trying to be a good role model to the boys and teach them to do the right thing.

Once or twice a month, Katherine and I go out for a nice breakfast.

We'll talk about what's going on in our lives. We also go for pedicures. She suggested I go with her, so I did, and now I love it. It's awesome and something we enjoy doing together that's very relaxing.

I have more energy at work.

As a manager, I get my maintenance team to do the fire system inspections. It means walking a block to the pump house building at the back of the property. A couple of weeks ago, instead of leaving my techs to do it, I went out there with them, which I could do because I'm stronger. They said, "Hey, what are you doing out here?" I said, "I'm just here to support you." I like being fully engaged with our associates.

I've lost 27 pounds and four inches off my waist.

People say, "What are you doing?" And it's great to get that confirmation. I feel amazing, and I feel more confident — this is a whole new me. Taking care of myself is a habit now. I haven't seen my doctor yet, but my goal is to come off medication and reverse my diabetes. I know I'm going to do it. I'm going to be here for my boys, and for their kids one day.



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