

John Tyler



\$5,000 WINNER
Neighborhood Market #2632,
Phoenix, AZ

As a kid I was super skinny. My parents divorced when I was seven and my mom raised us. It was a struggle, so we ate the cheap meals she could afford, like pizza and burgers. In junior high I gained weight; I was bullied and kids made fun of me.

As an adult, I've always been overweight.

At my heaviest I weighed 478 pounds. Last year I got pneumonia and I could hardly breathe. I was in the hospital a few times and I was diagnosed with congestive heart failure. I was a young man and I couldn't believe it — I was taking nine pills a day. I'm 42 and my doctors said if I continued to live the way I had been living, I'd be prone to heart attacks and could face an early death. It was a wake up call.

Then, my uncle Steve had a heart attack.

He was my father figure growing up and I love him so much. He was only 60 and could barely take care of himself. He's diabetic and still in bad health. I knew that I needed to be here for my wife, Rachel, and our three kids. Rachel worked at Walmart for 23 years and she encouraged me to download the Thrive app. It's great because we're taking the Challenge together.

My first Microstep was moving my body.

I started walking 1,000 steps a day and I joined a gym. We're going on family walks with our four dogs. And Rachel and I like to do yoga videos together. I also quit smoking — I used to buy a pack a day!

I cut down on soda and switched to drinking water instead.

I just have one diet soda every other day now. I cut out pizza and burgers — I'm done with fast food. Rachel and I cook together. We'll make chicken and fish and I love mashed cauliflower as a substitute for mashed potatoes. We cook "zoodles" (zucchini noodles) with ground turkey and diced tomatoes. Sometimes we'll get a vegetarian pizza with a cauliflower crust and it's delicious. To be honest, I'd rather eat that than regular pizza now.

I've lost 190 pounds.

Everyone in my family is amazed by my transformation. My sister, Amber, cries when she sees me because she's wanted me to get healthy for so long. She's my biggest cheerleader.

We celebrated my weight loss with a trip to Disneyland.

I could actually go on all the rides and it felt so great to be an active dad. There was a lot of shame before because I couldn't fit in the seats. This time, I could move around easily. The first day we walked for 20 miles, and Piper, our 14-year-old, had a great time. She loved the water rides.



We're going on family camping trips.

Recently we went to the Mogollon Rim. We've always enjoyed camping, but I used to stay behind at the camp. This time I was hiking with everyone. We climbed a mountain and I said, "I can't believe I'm doing this." We had a view of the entire valley. We could see deer and pine trees, and we watched the sun going down. It was beautiful and majestic.

I'm more relaxed.

I'm doing controlled breathing and paying attention to my breath — just inhaling and exhaling. I used to have insomnia. I'd wake up in the night and think I was dying if I had any pain. Sometimes I'd go into work on two hours of sleep. My sleep's improved a lot. I sleep like a baby, and I get six and a half hours a night. I'm not sluggish in the morning.

At work, I can climb a ladder without worrying that it will break.

I used to worry that it would be embarrassing or I'd get hurt. I'm inspiring people. Another manager said to me, "John, you look phenomenal." I never thought I'd be a person others would look up to.

When I saw my cardiologist, he was super impressed.

He said, "whoa, what happened?" Since losing all that weight, my blood pressure's down and he cut my meds in half. Now, I want to motivate people and I've been making TikTok videos, posting about my journey, and sharing my workouts.

I know I'm on the way to having a longer life. I'll be here for the people I love.

I'm becoming my best self — and I feel like I've saved my life.



THRIVE