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In the past five years, I gained a lot of weight. I was up to 260 pounds, and I'm not gonna lie, I felt depressed. Pizza was a big part of my diet, and I'd eat chips and candy at work. I felt really uncomfortable and it affected my self-confidence. My back hurt and my energy was non-existent. I'm 34, and I thought, "What am I going to look like in another few years?"

In January, I looked in the mirror and decided I needed to change.

I'm getting married to my girlfriend, Ashton, in October, and I want to be healthy and feel good. I also want to be a good role model for the kids we hope to have. Ashton eats really well and she likes to run, and I want to be able to keep up with her. So I started the Thrive Challenge.

My first step was cutting out sugar.

I also cut out red meat. Then I stopped drinking alcohol. It was tough to start with because I'd always have a pizza and a beer, but I wasn't a heavy drinker. I haven't had a drink now for two months and I feel much better.

I went from eating pizza to cooking fish, like rainbow trout, which I love.

I'll season it with a little salt and pepper and pair it with cherry tomatoes. That's my go-to quick meal. Or we'll have a grilled vegetable medley. Ashton and I are coming up with new recipes — we make a delicious salmon chowder. I live five minutes from work, so at lunchtime I'll often run home for lunch, and have something simple like eggs. If I need a snack, I'll grab a handful of cashew nuts or pistachios.

Ashton and I take our Cairn Terrier, Bruno, for walks.

We really enjoy being outdoors. There's a field near our house and Bruno has a blast when we run around with him. It's a lot of fun. Ashton and I are having a great time together. She's a meteorologist and we've actually done a lot of storm chasing! It's fun, but it can get a little scary.

We're big fans of geocaching.

It's like a GPS treasure hunt or a hide-and-seek app. People hide boxes in random places and inside they put trinkets or toys. You take an item out and put one in. Some of the hiding places are out in the woods or in parking lots, so we get a bit of a hike, and it's nice because there's a fun conclusion to your hike. The first thing we found was Lego, which is amazing because Ashton and I love Lego.



Once a week we play Lego and try not to be on our phones.

We're big enthusiasts. Recently I made a WALL-E Lego model, and he's sitting on my dresser. Ashton made a gigantic lighthouse with a harbor and a light that actually turns on. It's amazing because now that I've lost weight, I can sit on the floor building my models and my back doesn't hurt anymore.

I was staying up far too late and only sleeping for four to five hours.

I'm sticking to the same bedtime. In the morning, I wake up at six a.m. without an alarm, and I actually want to get up for work. I'm getting a full eight hours of sleep.

At work, I'm running around more and being physically active.

Last night, I was closing the store and some team members were struggling to get everything done. So I jumped in and helped them get a load of pots and pans off the truck and onto the shelves. They were pretty shocked and happy. But it was something I just wanted to do. And it didn't feel like a chore.

I have so much energy — I feel amazing.

I'm down 31 pounds. I'm looking forward to our wedding; I know I'll be able to pick out a great suit and I'll look good in it. Ashton is super proud of me, and so are my mom and dad. I grew up in Colorado and I want to be like my dad when we have kids. He taught me and my two brothers and sister all about the outdoors — fishing, camping, and building fires. I know I'll be out exploring with my own family and making memories. I won't be sitting on the couch.



THRIVE