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At the beginning of the year I hit the heaviest weight I've ever been. I got on the scale and weighed 300 pounds. I had no energy. Small things like bending over to tie my shoelaces were becoming a challenge. My wife, Jessica, and I have two boys: nine-year-old Jeremy, and Alexander, who's 11. I always wanted to be that awesome father who is active with his children, but I barely had enough energy to walk down the stairs, let alone going out to the back yard to throw a ball around. I'd sleep through their sporting events, and at 37 I just felt like a failure.

I knew I had to make a change.

For quite a while, I've known about the Thrive Challenge, and six months ago, I decided to try it myself and share my story.

I started to watch how much I was eating.

I still enjoy food I ate before, but I just make sure I don't over-indulge. One Microstep I took was cutting down on soda. Now, I have cut out soda completely and drink nothing but water. Most of the time, I'm making home cooked meals — a lot of grilled chicken, lean meats, and cold cut sandwiches. And for snacks, I'm eating apples and oranges instead of candy or chips. I've practically given up fast food — I used to have it five to six times a week.

Using Microsteps, I made a choice to be more active.

I made time every day to go for a run. I work night shifts and when I get off work, I go straight to the gym. After that I come home and get ready for bed. I have found that working out helps clear my mind and physically prepares my body for sleep. I'm sleeping better and I spend less time tossing and turning. I am at the point now where I don't feel complete for the day if I miss my workout.

I'm more active with my family.

I spend time with my kids, fishing and playing sports. My neighbor recently gave us his basketball hoop as his kids had grown up. So we have a lot of fun playing basketball in the driveway, and we play football in the backyard, or go down the road to the park to play baseball. And I jump on the trampoline with them.

We go for family walks.

We just went camping and hiked trails for a couple days. Once I started losing weight, my kids would want to come along and run with me. There were days when I wanted to just rest, but seeing how proud my family was kept pushing me to be the best that I could be.



Thrive Microsteps have given me new ideas about adding movement into my day.

For example, I'd never have thought of doing squats while brushing my teeth or going for a walk during lunch breaks. I've gradually gained so much more energy. Every time I work out, I keep telling myself that I'm doing this for my family. I'm getting healthier to improve our lives together.

I keep going down in clothing sizes, which is exciting.

I started out at size 3XL in shirts and now I'm between medium and large. It feels so uplifting. Sometimes I'll put on an old shirt from the attic that I never thought I'd be able to wear again, and it'll be too baggy.

I've lost 110 pounds and I feel so much better. I'm not sore and tired all the time.

I used to have to take a daily heartburn medication that I no longer need to take.

My wife and I motivate each other.

Jessica's also dedicated to being active, and she's lost weight too. We're constantly motivating each other. I've realized that as long as you give it your best everyday, little by little you start seeing positive changes.

The Thrive Challenge has definitely changed my life.

I ran a half marathon a couple weeks ago and it felt so good. I used to run half marathons but hadn't done one for a long time. This time I felt so much more energetic and shaved 45 minutes off my previous best time that I did seven years ago. I felt accomplished and happy.



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