

# Jake Lewter



**\$5,000 WINNER**  
**Fulfillment Center #4124**  
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I used to be a workaholic. My passion for helping others is what makes a career in HR ideal for me. However, this often leads to me neglecting my own well-being. I'd work tirelessly and push my mental health to the breaking point. There was a lot of stress, and I found comfort in food. I'd indulge in fast food after a long, taxing day at work. I resorted to sitting on my couch and watching TV to relax. My weight ballooned to 230 pounds. I'm 28, and I needed to improve my work-life balance.

## **I've been aware of the Thrive Challenge for a long time.**

But I never took the initiative to take a Challenge myself until I personally knew people who were winners, including my boss, Shawanda Hunter. And I got started. I began taking Microsteps — I limited fast food and started meal prepping. Packing my lunch prevents me from picking up fast food or skipping meals.

## **First, I purchased kitchen supplies from Walmart and started cooking.**

My first attempt at cooking didn't go well — I burned my dinner — but I gradually got the hang of it. I also decided to limit alcohol consumption to special occasions and maintain a two-drink maximum. Developing these habits took months, and I work on them every day. I've lost over 50 pounds, and I feel great.

## **To my surprise, I love working out.**

Growing up, I never participated in physical activities. You'd find me playing video games or watching TV rather than playing sports. However, in the past 10 months, I've developed an appreciation for working out. As I began to see progress, I enjoyed the experience more, and I overcame the feeling of discomfort in the gym. This is where my personal trainer has played a crucial role, teaching me correct lifting techniques and guiding me on how to use the machines effectively. Exercise makes me feel good. Now, when I'm under stress, I no longer drive towards the drive-thru for comfort; instead, I head to the gym.

## **Some simple Microsteps have helped.**

I lay out my workout clothes at night. And I place a water bottle on my nightstand to remind myself to hydrate first thing in the morning. I venture out into nature and go on hikes with friends, people I call my circle of "encouragement partners." My circle includes family and friends. And I'm grateful to have an entire team at work cheering me on. My co-worker, Selena, joined me for workouts and introduced me to new hiking trails. We go hiking and bowling together.



## **I'm improving my work-life balance.**

Although I don't have a spouse, kids, or pets, I consider my 650-plus associates as my family, and I don't want to let any of them down. I still work hard, but I strive to get everything done before leaving work, so I can relax and take care of myself. I remind myself that it's okay to answer an email the next morning or delegate a task to one of my associates.

## **Inspiring podcasts and books keep me motivated.**

I play a podcast to kickstart my day with a dose of inspiration. It might be Rob Dial's *The Mindset Mentor*, or Maggie Sterling's *Burn Fat With Your Brain*. They've all become my encouragement partners, even if they don't know it. I learn something new every day. One of my favorite quotes is from the book *Atomic Habits* by James Clear: "Making a choice that is one percent better or one percent worse seems insignificant in the moment, but over the span of moments that make up a lifetime, these choices determine the difference between who you are and who you could be."

## **I had often heard the saying, "Put your own oxygen mask on first."**

I never fully grasped its meaning until I began taking better care of my body and mind. I now experience less stress, and I have a positive outlook on life. I've become a firm believer in the power of changing just one habit, and how it can create a ripple effect."

## **I'm training for my first 5K.**

It's in the spring and I'm excited. As I reflect on my past self and look at photos of myself before the Challenge, I hardly recognize the person I once was. But when I look at recent photos, I see someone who is embracing life and the incredible journey it offers, always striving to do better.



THRIVE