

# Kevin Gaines

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**\$5,000 WINNER**  
**Neighborhood Market #6323**  
**Gulfport, MS**

Before I started the Thrive Challenge, I struggled with my weight. My wife, Keshia, and I have two children; Kristen, who's nine, and Kevin, who is now eight. Just after Kevin was born, I was promoted to store manager. Having a newborn and a one-year-old was stressful in itself. And with my new role, the stress increased tenfold because my store was brand new. I was a stress eater. Comfort food was my thing — soda, ice cream, and fried fast food.

## **I had high cholesterol and high blood pressure.**

I'm 40, and said to myself, "If I don't do something different, I might not be around for my family." So I downloaded the Thrive app in January.

## **I completely remodeled my lifestyle from top to bottom.**

When I wake up in the morning, I walk for 30 minutes. I'll have a protein shake or eggs for breakfast. At lunchtime, I work out at Planet Fitness. It's just five minutes from work so it's very easy.

## **For dinner, we'll have baked chicken breast or tilapia with asparagus or green beans.**

And we'll always squeeze in a salad. A few months ago we went on vacation to Florida and ate at Panera Bread. I had avocado salad there and loved it. That was actually an "aha!" moment for me because I'd never been a salad person. Now, I make my own avocado salad with cranberries. It's absolutely delicious.

## **Keshia encourages me; we're on this journey together.**

The kids are learning good habits while they're young, so eating well will become second nature. And for me, this new way of eating has been life-changing. I've lost 25 pounds so far, and I feel so much better about myself.

## **I'm a family guy and now I have energy for my kids.**

To be honest, prior to the Challenge, I didn't want to do anything but sit in my recliner. Now we go to the beach, or to the aquarium, and we play basketball. We live on the Mississippi Gulf Coast and we'll go fishing. We took the kids to Big Play, a huge entertainment center with mini-golf, race cars, roller coasters, and bowling. They love it and this time I didn't rush them to go home so I could sit in my recliner. I said, "What do you guys want to do next?" .

## **When I'm off work, I'll be cleaning out the house or gardening.**

I love mowing the lawn. I want every strand of grass to be perfectly coiffed; I want every flower to look beautiful. And I enjoy riding my four wheeler. To wind down in the evening, I relax by listening to jazz music, like Kenny G.



## **Keshia and I are having date nights.**

We'll get Grandma to take care of the children, and we'll go for dinner and a movie. We saw Avatar: The Way of Water — it's one of the best movies of all time! We also like having a romantic walk on the beach. It's really important to make time for each other — communication is key.

## **At work, I've always performed at a high level, but now I give it 100 percent.**

One day I was called to the online grocery department. A customer in a car with screaming kids had been waiting for her order and was upset. I got her groceries myself and took them out to her. She didn't realize I was the manager and she said, "Thank you, I'll let your boss know!" There were other cars lined up, so I stepped in to help my team, getting those customers in and out as fast as possible. It was a great moment. I said, "Okay Kevin, you're back!"

## **I'm writing a novel.**

I've already written a novel based on my own journey, Ext. 170 My Journey of Sacrifice, Heartbreak, and Triumph from Stocker to Store Manager! My new book is a rags-to-riches story. I'm so happy because I have more energy and creativity for my writing.

## **Being a father is the most important thing in my life; there's nothing that comes close.**

I'm encouraged about the future. I know I'm going to be here to see my children graduate. My cholesterol and blood pressure are both under control — I'm not taking cholesterol medicine anymore. To sum up the Thrive Challenge in one word it would be "Wow." I'm choosing to be a new, better version of myself. I've changed my life.



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