

# Kristen Korous

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**\$5,000 WINNER**  
**Walmart Supercenter #2757**  
**Murfreesboro, TN**

After giving birth to my daughter, Kendall, I suffered from severe postpartum depression. I'm 38, and my wife, Christine, and I also have a five-year-old son, Carter. There were days I had to force myself to get out of bed. I'd eat cookies and candies and fast food and quickly put on 45 pounds. I couldn't stand to look in the mirror.

## **Some of the depression goes back to when I came out to my family; it was tough.**

My mother and stepdad were accepting and supportive, but my biological father cut off contact with me and I haven't talked to him for six years. He's not met either of my kids. You realize who is there for you no matter what, and who isn't there for you. I felt angry and upset.

## **Finally, I said, "I have to do something different for myself and for my family."**

I started drinking water every single morning, then going for a walk around the neighborhood. For breakfast, I have oatmeal, hard boiled eggs or a fruit bowl. I'll grill enough chicken to last a few days for dinner. Christina and I make turkey burgers with rice and veggies, topped with shredded cheese. They're amazing and Carter loves them. It's great to be a positive influence on my kids. Carter will ask for a banana now instead of a cookie. I've lost 18 pounds but it's not just about losing weight, it's about being healthy and feeling good.

## **Carter is big into baseball and we'll play outside together.**

Before, when he asked me to pitch or catch, I'd say, "Maybe another day." Now I'm asking him to play! And I just taught him to ride a bike without training wheels. I have the energy to play with the baby — she's learning to walk. It's very rewarding to be active with the kids instead of watching from the sidelines.

## **I'm grateful for my family.**

My mother and stepfather are super active in the kids' lives and Carter really enjoys spending time with them, so they pick him up from school once a week, take him to dinner, and spoil him! They haven't missed one of his baseball games.



## **I'm especially grateful to my late grandmother, Pat.**

When I came out, I was scared to tell her, but she was completely supportive. She said, "I love you and I love Christina." She passed last month and losing her was tough, but she's still a big inspiration for me. She was very spiritual and I know she's definitely in a better place.

## **Christina and I are connecting more.**

We go for walks in the park in Nashville where we got engaged. We'll reminisce about how we met. And we went out for a nice dinner for her birthday. I love my kids more than anything in the world, but I've learned to prioritize my marriage, too. Every day, I say, "I love you" to Christina, and "Thank you for staying by my side, through thick and thin."

## **To relax I listen to upbeat music; I'm not going to lie, I love the Backstreet Boys!**

I also listen to Christian music — our church has its own station and the music is so uplifting. It helps me to stop overthinking everything, so I don't stress about money, or the kids, or what's for dinner.

## **At work I'm moving more and being more social.**

I work in asset protection — security — and I used to just sit in the office and watch the cameras, usually with a snack! Now I get out on the floor and walk around, chit-chatting with my co-workers — the human interaction is great. I check in on my friend Beth who works at the opposite end of the building. Once in a while I'll bring her coffee and I always show her the latest baby pictures.

## **I'm loving motherhood.**

There are so many milestones as the kids grow up. Kendall's getting her first teeth and Carter's starting kindergarten. I know how fast it all goes and I don't want to miss any of it as they grow up. I'm still sad about my dad but I've moved forward with people who do support us. Our church has helped me to let go of the sadness. If he changed, I think I would forgive him. But for now, we have many people who love our family, and I feel happy.



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