

# Keith Shubkagel

Hometown: Overland Park, KS

Age: 29

LOST  
**52**  
POUNDS

NOW  
**178**

WAS  
**230**



## Tell us a little bit about your background.

I've always been overweight. I went through a time period that I did work out, then I totally took off for several years and added more weight until I finally was to the point where I wanted to lose the weight. I was getting ready to go into plus sizes and start paying that extra 2 dollars, so I was just like, 'No way am I going to do that!'

## What did day one look like for you? Did you seek out a gym and a trainer or did you try to do it on your own?

I had a 24-Hour Fitness membership for quite awhile, but I was paying for it and just not using it. I realized the hard part was realizing that I'm not smart enough to do it completely on my own and that if I wanted to get weight loss results I needed to hire a personal trainer. I had several bad experiences with personal trainers before, so I just did a Google search and then interviewed some personal trainers.

## Walk us through a typical day of working out with Jill and how it differed from your previous routines.

Now I meet up with Jill Stoppel, my trainer, three times a week. One time will be just legs and the other two days will be upper body. With her, she can keep changing up things and making things very interesting, which I'm not that good at. The good thing with a personal trainer is that they can push you. When you're by yourself the minute you start feeling the burn you'll back off, but with a personal trainer they're going to be their constantly pushing you and encouraging you.

## Looking back, what were some of your previous downfalls from a diet perspective?

I ate a lot of frozen dinners and frozen meals that were easy and quick to cook. Breakfast would be just some yogurt or maybe a granola bar; I never before realized the importance of protein in the morning. With Jill, she made it easy to make those changes. We did it slowly, to where when you're making all of these little small changes you don't realize how much of a drastic change you're making until you stop and you look back. You don't realize it while you're doing it, so it's really actually pretty easy.

## When you first started your weight loss, what did you see the end result being?

When I first started I was 230 pounds and I wanted to definitely drop down under

200. I just wanted to be under that 200 mark, and looking back I dropped that weight actually pretty quickly. After I dropped the weight I changed the goal to actually put on muscle and build some strength. I had no clue how to build muscle though. I knew I could do cardio and stuff to lose the weight, but that's where the trainer came in. It really was the best decision that I ever made because now I look back at what strength I have been able to build and I really would have had no clue of how to do it without help.

## How has it changed your daily life now that you've lost weight and gotten in shape?

I'VE DEFINITELY SEEN AN INCREASE IN MY ENERGY AND MY SELF-CONFIDENCE; I MEAN I THINK I ACTUALLY LOOK GOOD NOW.

I've done 5k's in the past and I could never run the entire thing, but about 2 months after I started working out I did a 5k just because I wanted to see if I could do it. I ended up amazing myself because I was able to run the entire 3 miles in right around 28 minutes. I definitely never would have been able to do this without my personal trainer. I think the biggest thing with personal trainers is you just have to trust that they're there to help you and the rest will just work out.

## Do you think people perceive you differently now?

I'm not really sure if I could say that, but with my increase in self-confidence I definitely think I that I come off stronger now.

## Was it a huge milestone for you just to get under 10% body fat?

It is a really huge milestone. I always kept a scale close and I'd watch those numbers drop, but when I got down to around 170 pounds that's when I really started to put on some muscle weight. The hardest part for me was just to realize that weight gain was actually a good thing. I wanted to lose the weight so badly and I was so afraid of putting any weight back on that I had a hard time with the muscle gain at first. It was just a hard mind-set to change in order to see those numbers go up and realize that it's okay. Laying off of cardio was extremely hard for me to do though.

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