

# Employee Story: Jason MacKenzie, Presstran

## ***From Drunk to Monk***

Mental health and mental illness are topics both misunderstood and feared by many. Maintaining good mental health means striking an ideal balance between your home and work life, the social, spiritual and physical.

You can't see a mental illness like you can a physical ailment, but chances are, you or someone you know, is struggling with anxiety, depression, eating disorders, or one of the many other conditions that fall under the umbrella of mental illness.

## **Jason MacKenzie's Story**



“About ten years ago, shortly after the birth of our second daughter, she began to act out of character. She got extremely angry a lot, lost a lot weight and started disappearing for prolonged periods of time.”

There were other signs. Jason noticed that she wasn't sleeping much and she began drinking heavily and abusing her prescription anti-anxiety medication. She was eventually diagnosed with bipolar disorder, but their family went through years of chaos and worry that ended with her taking her own life.

“Having to sit down and tell your five and six year old children that their mother is dead and never coming back is an experience that changes you forever.”

But the single father of two had another problem to overcome. During this time, Jason turned to alcohol in order to cope with the stress, and continued drinking every day, even after his wife had passed.

“My new wife, who is a saint, helped me understand what I am capable of. My drinking was starting to upset her and she pushed me, with love and increasing pressure, to be better.”

Jason hit his personal rock bottom during that time and began feeling terrible about what he was doing to his family. He woke up one morning—after a particularly bad day that began with beer and ended in a bottle of whiskey—and “... in a moment of complete clarity I knew I was finished drinking. I have not touched a drop since and I know I never will again.”

It wasn't easy. He had tried and failed so many times, but when he managed to stop, he realized that if he could accomplish that, then there was nothing he couldn't do.



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“I spent the next few months walking around amazed that I was living free of alcohol. I realized that being capable of achieving goals and actually achieving them are two different things.”

Jason did some research and came up with a plan. Practicing success rituals every day helped him dramatically change how he looked at himself and the world.

“I meditate, practice daily affirmations, and use visualization.”

Now a trim 162 pounds, with only 7% total body fat, Jason eats a mostly vegetarian diet. As Presstran’s Department Leader of Purchasing and Manufacturing Information Systems, he rides his bike most days to work, a 30 km trek each way.

“I’ve ridden 4500 km on my bike in the last four months. I’m the leanest and fittest I have ever been. I understand that life is a journey and that I am far from perfect, but I try very hard to make each day the best it can be and next one just a bit better.”

Jason is fit, happier and healthier than he has ever been and wants to inspire others to find their balance for optimum health—both physical and mental. Visit Jason’s blog, [From Drunk to Monk](#), to learn more about his incredible journey.

## Jason’s Success Plan

1. Define how you want to live your life.
2. Make conscious choices to do the right thing.
3. Practice gratitude.
4. Look for ways to help others. The more you give in this world, the more you will receive.
5. Be open and honest with people about how you’re feeling, share your dreams, your struggles. People crave personal connections and the more people you create connections with, the more of an impact you will make on this world.



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