

# OVERCOMING 'ALL-OR-NOTHING' THINKING

**I recently received an email from someone who shall remain nameless wanting some information to help her overcome her 'all-or-nothing personality' or 'obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD)'. It made me shudder just a little, because for so many years, and still now to an extent that has been me. I know there are many people out there who suffer this affliction and so I thought I would write about what I did to overcome it.**



'All or nothing' refers to the approach we may take to a certain aspect or aspects of our life. In my career as a personal trainer I have seen it frequently in the weight area. People who try to change everything in an instant and when they find it hard to maintain they do absolutely nothing. In my case my 'all or nothingness' seemed very much to err heavily on the side of 'all' in some areas of my life and 'nothing' in others.

## **Where does it get you?**

I can tell you exactly where it has got me! The 'all-or-nothing' mentality in my life has largely lead me to disapointment, anxiety, burnout, injury, ill health and heartbreak! This is just the beginning of the list but enough for now!

I have been 'all-or-nothing' in my approach to exercise and consequently overtrained, got injured, achieved no results, was tired and grumpy. I have been obsessed in my approach to eating and alienated my self and created anxiety in my life through trying to avoid foods which I believed would make me fat and unhealthy and the people who would encourage me to eat and drink them.

I have been 'all-or-nothing' in my approach to my work, business and career. I have worked 15 hour days and worked seven days per week and in the process have lost money, lost sleep, lost energy, lost friends and lost relationships!

I was 'over the top' in my approach to drinking and I am sure you can imagine the negative impact of that!

...Mmmm maybe it was time to re-think my approach!

### Time to change

I finally got to the point where I realised if I don't change I am going to end up miserable, alone, poor and/or dead! None of those were things that I wrote on my 'dream' list! So the first step in my process was the realisation of the problem and then the willingness to do something about it.

The next thing I did was to think about and then write down a description of the way I wanted my life to be. I speak about this a lot, about creating a vision for your life, because without it you have no direction. I looked at all the different areas of my life that I was neglecting and decided how I wanted each area of my life to look. If you look back at two previous articles I have written;

[www.andrewjobling.com.au/attachments/File/Balance\\_in\\_life\\_is\\_a\\_choice.pdf](http://www.andrewjobling.com.au/attachments/File/Balance_in_life_is_a_choice.pdf) and [www.andrewjobling.com.au/attachments/File/The\\_One\\_Thing.pdf](http://www.andrewjobling.com.au/attachments/File/The_One_Thing.pdf) I go into this in much more detail.

### Time for action

The hardest bit for me was challenging my well established thinking and habits to allow some balance and moderation back into my life. I initially thought a day off exercise was 'being soft', but after forcing myself for long enough I found it actually enhanced my training efforts. I now do about one third of the volume of training I used to do and get better results – fancy that!

I used to think if I ate pizza and chocolate I had no will power and that it would make me fat. But after persisting with moderate indulgence it has now become a most pleasurable and healthy part of my eating regime and life. Not only that but I am less anxious and leaner than ever.



Overcoming the work thing was tough. As a personal trainer I would start work at 6am and work through until 8pm and did so for 15 years, so initially I felt guilty about getting up at 7am and finishing working earlier in the day. The thing that helped me the most was the understanding that if I didn't change this my life would never get better. I looked for different ways to make money that gave me more time and I invested that time in the things I was passionate about; my wife, my health, my writing and of course my pup Joia!

### Is it easy?

The simple answer is 'no', but if you were to ask me, 'is it worth it?', I would have to say without any shadow of a doubt it has been the best thing I have ever done. I would encourage any obsessive 'all-or-nothing' personality types reading this today to begin **now** to make the changes that will bring more joy, wellbeing and abundance into your life than you could ever imagine.