

All or Nothing Thinking Limits Progress

all or nothing
thinking



limiting beliefs after
weight loss surgery

Do it right, or not at all

All or nothing thinking, is this you?

If I can't get to the gym at least three times a week, it feels like it doesn't count.

If I can't plan out all my meals and grocery shop for the *whole* week, I don't grocery shop at all and keep eating out until I get to it.

If I can't seem to food journal more than 2 days at a time, why even try?

I ate a handful of Cheese Itz after dinner, I've already blown the whole "no snacking after dinner" so what's stopping me now?

Personally, it's in my nature to think it needs to be done RIGHT and falling off course of whatever 'right' feels like is very defeating. Out of the defeat comes giving up.

You may have noticed I like to use non-food analogies to make my point. This time, I'm going to talk about house cleaning.

How often is your house completely clean? If you're like me, it's right before company is coming to stay or we are hosting a party. That's about it.

I really WANT my house to be clean. I would love for all the toys to be in their labeled spots. All the laundry to be put away. The dishes to be put away, the sink and counter tops cleaned.

The amount of times I have made a new cleaning schedule to help us improve the systems of keeping the house clean, I cannot even count. I even checked out a book from the library called "Cleaning Ninja" to see if I could get any tips.

Yet with all the books, podcasts, posted cleaning schedule and evening the "home cleaning binder" I have put in place, the same is true about it only being completely clean right before company is coming.

But. This doesn't mean I don't stop trying to keep a nice house! Some days I get more behind than other days. Some days I feel great about the shape of the house before going to bed. Other days I truthfully have to roll my eyes, turn the lights off at the mess and walk away to get some sleep. I'll get some more cleaning done tomorrow. I will try a new system. I will purge things we don't need.

We will keep trying. House cleaning doesn't allow for all or nothing thinking! You'll need at least enough clean dishes and clean clothes to get you through tomorrow!

Partial Solutions Still Count

My friend Cassie goes to my church and is in my Mom's group that gets together every two weeks. While talking to her about limiting beliefs and how sometimes you have to get over what you want something to look like because it's just holding you back and she immediately said, "oh yeah, partial solutions."

My face lit up. YES! That's it! Partial solutions!

When the full solution just cannot work right now, a partial solution is still better than nothing.

My limiting belief was that my kids needed to be older to actually have a routine exercise plan. I already get up at 4:30 am to work. I go to bed early in the evenings because I am so tired. My toddler will come to me when I am on the treadmill. My kids won't stay still in the stroller.

All my circumstances were getting in the way of my idea of an exercise plan. Once I realized my limiting belief of what exercise had to look like, I was able to challenge what was holding me back. I was able to find a partial solution.

I joined Jazzercise and while I can usually make it 2-3 times per week, I have decided that was still worth it. I still struggle to think 2 times a week is worth it but the difference between how I feel the week I worked out twice versus the week I worked out ZERO times...is significant.

Back to the house cleaning example

Let's talk about partial solutions and my deep desire to have a clean house.

Partial solution: My dishes aren't ALL clean but I wiped down the counters and got all the dishes into the sink. That doesn't mean the *whole* kitchen is clean but it feels more clean than it was.

Partial solution: If I don't have time to *really* clean, I do my basics. Empty trashcans, make beds and get dirty laundry into the right hamper. Then I usually turn on something that smells good (Scentsy, Oil Diffuser, etc.)

My partial pickup solutions really do make my feel better. My mood truly improves. I calm down a little. I enjoy my kids (my messy kids) more and I bring less stress to my family.

Partial solutions are still progress. **Progress, not perfection.**

What all or nothing thinking is holding you back from progress?

If you battle with all or nothing thinking, I encourage you to get a little more comfortable with the "grey" areas of life.

In what ways do you experience all or nothing thinking?

Can you relate to the examples I first started with? I already ate a handful of Cheese Itz, what's going to stop me from snacking the rest of the night?

You are!

You ate a handful of cheese itz. Was it a "perfect night" of not snacking? No. But if you take a moment and ask yourself, "what do I really want to do tonight?"

[Call a friend I haven't talked to in a while?](#)

[Finish the photo book from my vacation that I haven't gotten to?](#)

[Take a long bath and go to bed early?](#)

Spoiler alert I will be talking about limiting beliefs and night time snacking on my Live Coaching Call Sunday evening for my members doing the Get Focused Challenge. But I'll go ahead and give you my take home message now.

When you want to successfully take something away (snacking) you have to replace it with something even better.

What's the partial solution to eating something you shouldn't have? Make a pivot and find something even more enjoyable to you. Replace it with something **better**. Forgive yourself for your goof up but don't let it steal the rest of you day.

What about the partial solution to meal planning? On some level, you may think you need to batch cook the whole week and then take a picture of your pre-made meals. But life got in the way and that is just not happening.

Place a grocery pickup order for your staples. Grab easy protein sources like pre-cooked chicken sausage links or fajita chicken. Heck, order some eggs that are already boiled and peeled for you.

Run into the grocery store when you end up with a thirty minute break and you're not far from the store. Grab a rotisserie chicken. Pick up a thermal bag if you can't get home right away. Make partial solutions happen to keep you on track! You are a problem solver!

Thanks for reading :) I hope you found something encouraging to you in your journey.

-Steph Wagner, Bariatric Dietitian

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