

## SUCCESS WITHOUT SACRIFICE: CHANGE YOUR WAY OF THINKING

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Do you believe in having it all?

A lot of people have given up on this idea. They act as if their lives are limited to a series of trade-offs, and they end up making difficult choices they really don't want to make.

Take Whitney. Whitney was a leading journalist who used to travel constantly, worked non-stop and was starting to feel bitter and jaded. In order to succeed in her career, she thought she had to sacrifice everything. She ate on the road, barely got enough sleep, and never had time to relax and enjoy her family and friends. She almost never had quality time to herself.

In her mind, this was the sacrifice she had to make. But that's a very limited view. There's another way Whitney would be able to approach her life – one that would be more fulfilling and sustainable, while still making it possible to be the successful career woman she wanted to be.

This article will cover two kinds of thinking – one that's limiting, and one that's empowering. When you learn to embrace a more powerful perspective, you are going to feel like you truly have it all.

### EITHER/OR THINKING

Take a closer look at Whitney's assumptions. When Whitney was sacrificing herself, her health, and her relationships for her job, she was assuming that she had to choose between different parts of her life to make it all work.

- *Either* she could get the breaking story *or* she could get enough sleep.
- *Either* she could travel non-stop *or* she could give up her career dreams.
- *Either* she could be known for her quality journalism, *or* she could have a life.

These are the kinds of assumptions many of us make about our own lives. This is Either/Or Thinking.

Either/or thinking means thinking in black and white.

- *Either* I can make a difference *or* I can make money.
- *Either* I can be relaxed *or* I can be accomplished.
- *Either* I can be happy now, *or* I can be happy later.

Either/or thinking is an extremely restrictive, yet common, way of viewing the world. We can box ourselves into a corner believing we can *either* have this *or* that, and we force ourselves to make a choice.

Not so. If you pay attention to your usual thought patterns, you can learn to change the ones that limit you or hold you back.

### **BOTH/AND THINKING**

For Whitney, the sacrifice of a high-powered career had taken its toll long enough, and Whitney was ready to quit. She called it “retiring,” but anyone could see Whitney didn’t really want to leave the job that she loved. She just figured if she wanted a better quality of life she was going to have to make a choice.

What if there was another possibility? What if she could continue to work and excel and also improve her quality of life?

When Whitney opened up to this idea, suddenly a new world of possibilities became apparent. Maybe she could lengthen her business trips – even by a day – so she could both complete her reporting and also have time to catch her breath and take some time for herself. Maybe she could get some administrative help so she could both meet deadlines and also get out from under the rest of the paperwork. Maybe she could brainstorm creative options for redesigning her schedule (redistribute the work, work from home, get an intern, etc.) so she could both keep up with the fast-paced culture of the business and also lead the way to a higher quality of work and life.

This is the kind of creative thinking that can free us from the sacrifice. This is Both/And Thinking, because it helps you see new possibilities – possibilities in which you can finally have it all.

Both/and thinking means combining ideas for a more streamlined, synergistic approach. Just look at how a simple change in wording can shift your perspective.

*Either/or:* Either you can work a less crazy schedule or you can keep your job.

*Both/and:* You could both work a less crazy schedule and also keep your job.

*Either/or:* Either you can retire, or you can stay busy and active.

*Both/and:* You can both retire and also stay busy and active.

*Either/or:* Either you can exercise and rest, or you can fulfill your responsibilities.

*Both/and:* You could both exercise and rest and also fulfill your responsibilities.

Just reading these sentences, can you see how both/and thinking opens up the possibilities? By practicing both/and thinking, you’ll start to see different aspects of your life overlapping to get the real synergy going. Then the momentum will take on a life of its own.

### **HAVING IT ALL**

You can learn to practice more expansive thinking – learning to be more, do more, and achieve more by thinking in powerful ways. Ask yourself, “How can I pull together the different parts of my life so I can both be a better leader and also lead a better life?”

There's a simple exercise you can use any time you find yourself stuck in Either/Or thinking that will help you think in more expansive Both/And ways.

1. Notice where you are forcing yourself to make a decision. (“*Either* I can have this *or* I can have that.”)
2. Identify the two things between which you are forcing yourself to choose. (Work or rest? Make money or have fun? Get ahead or enjoy my life?)
3. Bring together those two things in a single sentence. How can I both \_\_\_\_\_ and also \_\_\_\_\_?

When you take this kind of thinking to heart, you will be living and leading with integrity. You will be who you say you want to be and doing what want to do. In the bigger picture of your life, that amounts to “having it all.”



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