



Before and After – How Corporate Transformation Methods Can Help You Lose Weight

A personal essay about failure, discipline, painful honesty – and the surprisingly precise parallels between corporate turnaround and the battle against one's own weight.

By Christian Rook

A few weeks ago, I stumbled across the story of **Angus Barbieri**. A name you won't find on talk shows. A man who wrote no books. And yet I was overwhelmed. Shocked – in the best possible way.

Angus Barbieri was a young man from Scotland, 27 years old, morbidly obese. He weighed 205 kilograms and was deeply unhappy with his body.

So, one day in 1965, he made a decision: to stop eating for a while. He checked himself into Mayfield Hospital in Dundee and began medical treatment.

No joke. No exaggeration.

He fasted – under medical supervision – for **382 (!!!) days**. One year and 17 days!

No solid food. Just tea, water, occasional vitamins and electrolytes.

By the end of that year, he had lost over 120 kilograms. His body had essentially consumed itself. Incredible.

I sat there reading this – and I was stunned.

Just a week earlier, I had done something that, for me, was already unimaginable: I had completed a **100-hour fast**.

Roughly four and a half days without food. And it was hard. Much harder than I expected.

Fatigue, dizziness, chills, withdrawal, calf cramps (tip: electrolytes help!).



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But also: a deep internal dialogue. A sense of clarity. And eventually, pride.

And then I read about a man who didn't fast for four days, but for over a year.

And I realized: the human body can do this – but only if the mind allows it. If a person decides to be radically honest with themselves.

I wanted to know: what drives someone to such a decision? And then I realized: I knew the answer. I had carried it with me for over thirty years.



Angus Barbieri - Before and After - Source: Wikipedia

Thirty Years of Shame

Today, I am 56 years old. And for nearly my entire adult life, I've been overweight. Up until my 25th birthday, I was slim. Skinny, even. Some said too skinny.

But then it got difficult. And heavy.

I went through phases when I thought I had things under control. I tried countless diets, intermittent fasting, calorie tracking, elaborate plans. I lost weight. And gained it back. Over and over. The classic yo-yo effect.

What remained wasn't just the weight. What remained was the exhaustion. The quiet shame. The fear of not fitting into airplane seats.

The awkward conversations with doctors who chose their words carefully. The glances that didn't judge, but also didn't comfort.

The subtle judgment of a slim society that doesn't aggressively fat-shame, but always seems to whisper: "Well, looks like you really let yourself go."

As if it were just a question of willpower.

And the older you get, the harder it becomes.

Obesity isn't a moral failure. But it often feels like one. It's a slow, grinding erosion of self-efficacy. And over time, it becomes a shadow you carry with you – physically, emotionally, socially.

Why I Fasted for 100 Hours – and What That Has to Do with My Job

I'm a turnaround manager. Interim CEO, plant manager, restructuring expert. I'm called in when companies are stuck. When nothing works. When numbers bleed red, customers vanish, employees resign. My job is to bring clarity. Honesty. Actionability. To pull the car out of the ditch. To roll up my sleeves and deliver results where others have failed. And I love this job.

And one day – after decades of frustration – I asked myself: why don't I apply the same methods to myself and my weight?

If I can help companies radically transform – why not my own body?

So the decision was made. I built a system. I spoke with my doctor. I committed to intermittent fasting, supported by Ozempic – a medication that helped me tame my hunger when willpower alone wasn't enough. I started weighing myself daily. I tracked my blood pressure – four times a day. I paid attention to food, movement, sleep.

And most of all: I began to treat myself like a company in crisis.

Transformation – Personal and Professional: A System Comparison

The parallels are striking – and go deeper than I initially realized. Here are just a few of the stages:

1. The crisis needs a name.

Many companies claim they want change – as long as they don't have to name the problem. It's the same with obesity: the symptoms are obvious, the mirror avoided. But transformation begins with honesty. Without diagnosing the root causes, there's no therapy.

2. External help is not a weakness.

Angus had doctors. I have my doctor. Companies have consultants, interim managers. External professionals can help because they aren't caught in the internal swamp. They bring objectivity. They see what others can no longer see. They're allowed to speak hard truths.

3. Treating symptoms is not enough.

In companies this means: don't just cut costs, find root causes. In my case: not just eat less, but re-assess my entire lifestyle.

Why do I eat? When? What am I compensating for? What am I numbing? (Here, by the way, a good partner can help enormously. Thank you, Kosjenka!)

4. You need KPIs – daily.

What you don't measure, you can't manage. I weigh myself every day. I track my stats. I spot patterns. I adjust. And I celebrate small wins – just like you would celebrate a single percentage point improvement in production throughput.

5. There will be setbacks – but also the strength to get back up.

No company is restructured without resistance, relapse or doubt. The key is: the system holds. The process continues. It's not perfection that matters – but persistence.

6. Medication, tools, enablers are not short-cuts – they're part of the plan.

Ozempic helped me. It wasn't a betrayal of my discipline – it was a door-opener, allowing me to get back into the rhythm. Just like a new ERP system isn't a silver bullet, but a prerequisite for better process flow.

I've already come a long way. My blood pressure has normalized. I have more energy, I've lost almost 20 kilograms. And I feel my body changing. I feel my posture changing. I'm no longer powerless. I'm active again. I'm back in control.

How often have I seen the same thing in companies? That quiet transformation from passive to proactive. The moment employees begin making decisions again. The moment culture begins to shift. The moment energy returns to the system. And yes – it's hard. It's uncomfortable. It takes effort. But it's worth it.

Final Thought

Perhaps this is the most important sentence I take from all of this:

Transformation is not a destination. It is a daily act of self-responsibility. It is the path.

Whether in a company. Or in your own body. And sometimes, it begins with a simple decision: now. Today. Differently.



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