



THE CHRONIC ILLNESS RECOVERY PODCAST

Episode 38

Jop's Inspiring Chronic Fatigue Syndrome Recovery Story

Toby: Hello, and welcome to another success interview by CFS Health. I am your host, Toby Morrison. And in this interview we sit down with a past member by the name of Jop P, 47 year old male from Australia, who had been ill with chronic fatigue syndrome for over seven years. And this man went from being completely bedbound, to walking 20,000 steps a day and living his life, being a fantastic father to his three kids and a loving husband to his wife.

And in this interview we sit down and we really talk about what it took for him to get healthy and start living again. If you are feeling uninspired at the moment, if you are feeling like you are lacking direction, if you feel like you are sick and tired of being sick and tired, this interview is going to change your life.

Please sit back, relax and leave some love for Jop. You know, this interview was really, really powerful and profound, and I know is going to make a big difference in your life if you can take his wisdom on board. Sending you a ton of love and enjoy the interview. Bye for now.

Toby: Hello, and welcome to the CFS Health Recovery Podcast. I am your host, Toby Morrison, and in today's interview, we are so lucky to have Jop on the other end, who has recovered from chronic fatigue syndrome and he's been so kind enough to come on and share his amazing journey with us. So jop, welcome, welcome to the show!

Jop: Thanks. I'm thrilled to be here.

Toby: Ahh, I'm getting shivers down my spine because obviously you joined our program, I think it was last year, or was it the year before?

Jop: It was December 21.

Toby: There you go. You did the program, that was great, and then you kind of departed and we hadn't really spoken since. And you're in our free information group too, and I was scrolling through there not too long ago, and I see a

comment from Jop Purnell, and I was just like, "Oh, what's he up to?" And you were replying to someone who's really struggling at the moment, and you were just saying, you know, "don't give up. I've been where you've been. Now I'm fit and healthy." I think you said, "I walk 20,000 steps a day, you know, I'm living again. And don't give up." And I just thought, wow! And I reached out to you and I was like, "let's chat! I think you need to speak to the, you know, the world needs to hear your story," so thanks for coming on. Yeah. Really appreciate it.

Jop: Happy to share it.

Toby: Yeah. Super pumped.

Jop: Yeah, for sure.

Toby: So, you know, if you can take us back seven, eight years ago when you first became ill, you said, you know, you suffered for around almost seven years. What was your life looking like?

Jop: Before I got sick?

Toby: Yeah.

Jop: Yeah. So life was pretty good. I had three young kids, happy family. I'd just got a good promotion at work. But that didn't quite turn out unfortunately, because it was a new role in a new team, in a new department, that was set up prematurely. My team and I literally sat there for six months doing nothing, shuffling papers. So I was using the opportunity to get fit. I was on a big health kick. I was running 8km before work, and then I aimed to do 10,000 steps before I got to work. I'd go for a walk like 45 minutes around the city at lunchtime. I'd walk 20 flights of stairs for like a coffee break. So I was just getting as fit as possible. So life was going well and then it crashed.

Toby: You were diagnosed with chronic fatigue syndrome, and probably something you had never thought of before. You know, before you went through this, you were, living the high life, I guess, and really just not even thinking about this possibility. What was it like when you went through this process of, you know, one minute you're a father of three kids, you're in business, you're running, you're pushing yourself, you're doing boot camps. You said you're going out drinking. What was it like when you hit rock bottom?

Jop: Yeah, it was really tough, and it was strange because I didn't know what was going on. I was going to my GP a couple of times a week with symptoms I couldn't explain. I got bronchitis initially, that's what triggered the ME or CFS. And I did a, I remember I did a course of antibiotics and that kind of cleared up the cold and flu symptoms, but I was still getting fatigued every day and didn't

understand it. And I tried to go back to work, and my team kind of took one look at me and said, "dude, you're not well, go home. Get better." And I never went back to work. So it was really hard, and after my GP sent me to do a whole lot of tests: blood tests, and MRIs, and chest ultrasounds, and urine tests, and all the tests came back saying I was a really healthy human being. And then after seeing him a couple of times a week for maybe two months, he said, you know, "you're ticking all the boxes for chronic fatigue syndrome." So I was kind of lucky in that I had a GP that was able to diagnose it.

Toby: Totally. I mean, some people, some people are so dismissed, like they go to a doctor and they're like, "you're just making this up. It's all in your head, you know, you just need to sweat out." So the fact that you got a great doctor initially was the first point of call, really.

Jop: Yeah. So then I did a- well, once he told me I probably had chronic fatigue syndrome, but he said, "we can't officially diagnose that till it's been six months of chronic symptoms," I went home and googled chronic fatigue syndrome and I was like, shit, yeah, this sucks. I remember for a while I was kind of waking up every day thinking, "am I better? Am I over this?" This is before I knew about the chronic fatigue. And then it kind of dawned on me one day that I'm not just gonna wake up and be better. This is it. My life has changed. And what's kind of weird is I was working in change management, so it's my job to engage people with change. So I knew I was facing a change.

Toby: Oh, ironic!

Jop: Yeah! I didn't have much choice, like I had to embrace it and it was a change forced upon me and I couldn't fight it, so I wouldn't say I embraced it, but I accepted it.

Toby: Wow. This is so interesting, because I remember you were a really interesting client to work with, because your attitude from the get-go was one of real curiosity and one of this like, "tell me what I need and I'm gonna go do it." Can we just track back just a second? Cause this is gold. What were some of the symptoms that you were experiencing every day? You know, when you were going through that process of seeing your GP two times a week?

Jop: Fatigue, brain fog, headaches. I had a hypersensitivity to noise. It was really hard for me to be in the same room as my kids, which was, you know, tough because you got young kids, and you love 'em and you wanna be with them. But I remember one morning my kids were playing Lego, they're in the same room and had a box of Lego and they were just sifting through the box trying to find the right piece of Lego and it was so loud, like I was almost

yelling at them to shut up. But you know, I just had to leave the room cause I couldn't tolerate the noise. So I had to get myself some noise canceling headphones. I was having anxiety as a lot of people do, because you're not sure what's wrong with you and what's causing all these symptoms. I was having nausea. It was about 10 symptoms I was getting. I can't remember them all. But I guess those are the main ones.

Toby: Yeah, I think people can relate a lot. You know, I think the main ones that most people experience is definitely the brain fog, that extreme fatigue, muscle aches and pains and, you know, sensitivities too. So it's so funny that you're in change management. I could imagine if you're in change management, you're someone who thinks about opportunity versus, the things that you can't control. So you got diagnosed with chronic fatigue syndrome, you're googling stuff. What was your attitude? You know, did you believe for a moment that it wasn't possible that you could get better? What was your thought process like?

Jop: Yeah. Well, I read up on the stats, I guess, and, you know, I was aware that only 5% to 10% of people make a recovery.

Toby: Well that's what they say online. Yeah, that's right. Yeah.

Jop: Yeah. You know, I was hopeful that I'd be in that 5%, 10%. I tried different things, tried a naturopath and an exercise physiologist, and I did a different program which encouraged graded exercise therapy and cognitive brain therapy, which, you know, obviously didn't help. They might have set me back a bit. But it was 2021 and the first half of 2022, when I was doing the program, I was pretty much bedbound and I hadn't been in that stage before. You know, for the first four or five years I'd been able to walk around for 20 minutes, which doesn't sound like much, but it's much more than being bedbound. Life wasn't super bad in those first four years, but then there was a year when it was really tough, and I'd kind of resigned myself to being part of that 90% that wouldn't recover, and that, "this is life," and, you know, I was depressed, obviously. But then found your program, and you know, at first I was skeptical. Then I started looking at all the case studies you've got of people who have recovered, like this story we're doing now, and I was really encouraged by that. And once I got started in the program and understood what was required, then like you said, I was just 100% committed and I wanted to change. And then, you know, I started believing that I would be in that 5%, 10% and every day I'm believing it more and more.

Toby: What were you skeptical about? Because I think when you go through the merry go round of doctor to doctor, and practitioner to practitioner, and you try one modality and then the next modality and the next, you're sick and tired of it. Like you just get to the point where you're just fed up. I know I was when

I went through it, and you know, when I started helping people professionally with chronic fatigue syndrome and their recovery, I knew that was the first thing that everyone thought, "oh, not another person to go and see," you know? And it was always different when, once they came in and they realized, "oh, this guy's not a doctor and he's not just gonna give me false hope, he's gonna give me a proper plan—" like, what were you initially skeptical about?

Jop: Well, I mean, I have to say I was lucky that I had a good GP who gave me a diagnosis, so I didn't see a lot of GPs. I saw a naturopath who didn't help me at all, just sold me a whole lot of vitamins that I didn't need. But my skepticism was, I guess, I didn't know that you could recover, I guess I was holding onto that 'cure' versus 'recovery'. So I was probably waiting for that magic pill that would come along that you could take to help you be cured. So I didn't know that, you could slowly recover. So that was my skepticism, that you were saying, you know, "follow us and we'll get you there," but it didn't take me long to go through all your materials to realize that there's merit to what you're saying, and I jumped on board pretty quick. My attitude changed.

Toby: It did. Yeah. I do remember at the start you were unsure, you know, it's like, "is this gonna work? Like, this is how bad I am right now. Like, what do I do?" And it's really hard. And you know, I wanna say the people out there as well, you know, there is a lot of misinformation in the online space. You know, these statistics that you can read and hold onto and go, "oh shit. Does that mean that only 10% of people who get it recover?" And I just wanna say that not everything's true online. You know, you have to be very careful what you read and the stories that you read. There's subjectivity to everything. So please don't be disheartened if you're someone who has been reading lots of negative stuff online, that's just one person's story, or one person's set of research, and it's not necessarily covering everything. So Jop, that is fascinating. The fact that you just said then, "the difference was I was expecting maybe this is going to be a cure, or maybe the next thing I try will cure me," versus going, "actually there's things that I can do to help myself recover my health."

You mentioned before this, before we jumped on this call, we had a quick chat and you mentioned New Year's Eve. I think it was 2021. Tell us what happened that night.

Jop: Yeah, yeah, yeah. So I'd just signed up to the program a week or two before then, I'd been going through all your materials, all your resources, learning, reading. So it was New Year's Eve, my wife had taken our kids out to a friend's house for a party. I didn't have the energy to do that, so I was home alone. I had a big glass of whiskey in my hand. I was drinking a lot, thinking that drinking would make me feel better at the end of the day. But I learned that that has a reverse effect.

Toby: How were you feeling at that time? Just like, probably totally overwhelmed and depressed.

Jop: Yeah, yeah, depressed, certainly. So I was feeling really bad, and then I remember looking at my drink thinking, "I don't even want this. I'm just drinking it cuz I was a drinker," and it kind of dawned me that the changes that I need to make in order to change my health started with drinking. I won't say I went cold turkey, but I dramatically gave up drinking and noticed the differences right away. Felt so much better for it. So it was just, yeah, I had that moment of clarity. I realized that I needed to change my lifestyle, change my habits in order to change my health.

Toby: One of my favorite sayings, and I think you know this one, is "if it's to be, it's up to me."

Jop: Yeah, yeah, yeah. And that was true, yeah. I don't know if you remember, I had a whole lot of cards. I've got them here. Ok. All these cards with messages. Toby: Oh, yes, yes. I do remember that! Hold it up for a second. Let's just have a look, just so people can see at home. And I'll read them out. What have you got?

Jop: So here's what we were just talking about.

Toby: "If you want things to change, you need to change." Yeah. Powerful. "Be consistent, not perfect. The rewards will come." I even love it how you've numbered them. For the people who are listening on the podcast Jop created these cards and they're quote cards, but you used them as reminders every single day, didn't you?

Jop: Yeah. So I really like this one.

Toby: I love this one. "Don't stress about things that are not important. What's the worst that can happen? Your health is your priority."

Jop: Yeah, so I've got about 50 of these and this I guess relates back to my career in change management. So I was a communications manager. I was like the one who would write the message or come up with the message that would engage people in the need to change.

So, you know I'm, I guess, a writer. And this was my strategy for change. Like, I would read through all these cards two or three times a day until the messages sunk in that, you know, these are the changes you need to make. And I would keep reading them until they were implemented in my brain and I just knew what to do.

Toby: So Good. For people who don't realize this, this is actually a form of brain

retraining. You know, it's a form of reframing and creating new neural pathways, which then create the behavior to make the changes. Jop, tell me what happened. When you were reading these things out every day- and I know how committed you were back then- it's not just about reading some positive words, right? Like, this is what people don't understand, and we say this all the time: chronic fatigue syndrome is not a mindset problem, right? Fully, it's a neurological, physical condition. But we say that mindset is very important because when we change our mindset, it changes our behavior. When we change our behavior, it changes our actions. And when we change our actions, it changes our results. What happened when you started to read those things every single day? I mean, I got to see it through the program obviously, but the people at home, what happened through this process?

Jop: Well, it was a slow process. So, from a stage of being bedbound, I had to, you know, have reminders for myself not to get up. And what will happen if you do get up, and like this card, "don't do anything. Don't lift anything. Ask for help. Seriously!"

Toby: Yeah, yeah, yeah, exactly. Right things at the right time. So, you know, at that point it wasn't about pushing yourself, it was about restoring energy when you're in stage one of recovery.

You mentally rehearsing these powerful statements and really kind of getting to the zone of focus and commitment, what. What happened as you started to, you know, really look at this and pay attention to what you were focusing on, really directing your energy, what happened on an action basis? You know, obviously at the start you're in stage one, so you just mentioned resting was really paramount at the start for you, but then as you started to get better, like what were some of the behaviors that really helped change and help you move forwards in your recovery?

Jop: I guess being really disciplined with my action. I knew I had to sit- and not just sit, but sit still. So I was watching a lot of TV, lot of Netflix. I think I clocked Netflix, I watched everything. I understood what I needed to do, so I knew I had to sit still. I knew I had to ask for help, and not be ashamed to ask for help. I knew I had to have a better diet and keep hydrated and get sleep. So, what happened was over time, my symptoms started decreasing, and I started feeling better and things weren't so bad. And this is six months of hard work. Once the symptoms come down, then your energy starts to grow. As I kind of went through different stages of like finding my baseline, then sticking to my baseline- and I think it took me about three months to properly find my baseline and be able to get through a day without fatigue, which was really hard work. And then, you know, stick to that for months on end of basically doing nothing. Just sitting still, eating, drinking water.

Toby: When you say doing nothing, you mean just doing nothing that was not

conducive of recovery.

Jop: Yeah. Yeah. So I couldn't read a book. That just gave me headaches. So all I could do was watch TV, really. I was fine watching TV, I know that some people can read books, but they can't watch TV, so, you know, M.E's different for everyone. I embraced watching TV and that was my, I guess, method of coping, of survival. I would find really good drama shows on TV, and lose myself in those, watch really good drama TV for a few hours at a time, so I don't have to think about that I can't do anything.

Toby: What did you do to build up? So over time, you know, you started at a pretty low level, obviously, and I know those first three months in the program were probably the most difficult. In fact, like, it felt, I mean, from memory, just from remembering your posts and stuff, like, it was hard and it was overwhelming, and it was like, "how long do I have to do this for?" What were some of the other things that you learned through the program that were most helpful? What you said before, baseline was one of them.

Jop: So diet. Diet I think is massive. So avoiding alcohol and sugar and caffeine and dairy and gluten. I actually just went and did a blood test to see if I've got the celiac disease for gluten intolerance, cause my wife is a celiac and I know my mom carried the gene, so I was curious to know if I was celiac and then maybe, if that was part of the cause of me getting chronic fatigue initially.

Toby: You know, for the people who don't know, we're really big on nutrition. We're really big on food as fuel. You know, people don't understand the importance of it, fueling your body every single day. When you are fighting virus, infection, when your body's, really trying to protect itself, your brain and your body, you need to give it the energy and the sustenance to provide you with the healing foundations. What were some of the key things around your nutrition that helped you the most? Was it eating regularly?

Jop: Yeah, yeah. Yeah. Eating regularly, healthy foods. So, you know, I guess up until three months into the program, I think I was still drinking a few cups of tea a day. And I cut out that tea, that caffeine. I just went to herbal tea. But yeah, eating, I really got a lot out of that 'food is fuel, is energy'. That really resonated with me. So I ate a lot and you know, I was eating every couple of hours. I'd have, a little trolley next to me when I sat on the couch, I had jars of nuts and chickpeas and healthy foods. And you know, I found I actually started putting on weight from what I was eating, but I knew I was feeling better. And I believed that it was doing the right thing for me, even though I was putting on weight that I didn't want, I was already overweight. I'd learned that down the track, when I was starting to recover, I would be able to lose the weight. The first six months of doing the program, I probably put on another six kilos just from eating more nutritious food, but since then- you know, I peaked at 87 and now

I'm down to 77.

Toby: 77 kilos for our American friends, not pounds!

Jop: Yeah, yeah, yeah, that's right. We're on the metric system. Yeah, so I'm losing weight and I'm thrilled about that. So yeah, diet has been massive. Journaling was really important. I still do that every day. I like the, the mantra of "you're either recovering or you're learning." And learning from your mistakes, if you get fatigued, you know that it's okay, you figure out what caused it, and resolve to do better going forward. If you stood for five minutes instead of four minutes and that caused fatigue, then the next day work on four minutes and stick to it, which is a lot, lot easier said than done. It's really hard work and requires a lot of discipline. But that's what will get you there, I guess. So, yeah, diet, journaling, good sleep, getting consistent sleep. I go to bed and try and have lights out by 10, 10 o'clock. My wife likes to watch a bit of TV in bed, so I just slip on my eye mask and I'm out. Lights out for me, conversation over! So I'm really consistent with that.

Toby: I know what you looked like when you first joined the program, and you look like Superman now. When we jumped on Zoom this morning, I was like, you look like Clark Kent! You know, like the hair and the skin. Yeah, exactly. He's got the glasses on now! Yeah, they're perfect! But you know, you're a picture of health now. It's Unbelievable. And that's the hard thing to paint that picture of like how bad you were when you first joined the program.

There's a transition period, Jop, from stage one in recovery, where you're really suffering and the symptoms are really prevalent- they're there all the time, it's very hard to find pockets of joy and energy. There's a transition period though, where you switch from focusing on symptoms and doing less, to actually expanding your baseline and increasing your capacity over time. Can you speak to that for a second? Because, you know, many people think that they just need to do 'less is more' all the time, and that actually can hold them back if they stay there for too long. And I know you went through that change.

Jop: Yeah. Yeah. So I remember there was another great little message from you, which I know I've got on one of my cards somewhere, but "what got you through stage one won't get you through stage two."

Toby: What got you here won't get you there. Exactly.

Jop: Yeah. Yeah. So, I got used to my routine of what got me through, you know, finding my baseline and sticking to my baseline until symptoms came down. And it actually took a bit of courage to start expanding my activity, and doing a bit more. I had some apprehension about it, cuz you don't want to crash again, obviously, that's everyone's worst fear in this program. But it wasn't so bad, you

know? So when you do things like having a good diet, and getting good sleep, and keeping hydrated, and avoiding stress, and sticking to your baseline, then your symptoms come right down. And if I did get fatigued, you know, it would be maybe I'd feel sick for an hour or so, and that was it. And then I started thinking, "well, that's not so bad. I can handle that. You know, I can still go to work."

Toby: Energy dips. Exactly. They're not crashes, they're just energy dips. Exactly.

Jop: Yeah. So then, you know, I went through the 'little by little becomes a lot', so I think it was from June last year, every fortnight, every second Thursday, I increase what I do by 10%. So that started out from being able to stand for maybe two minutes to, you know, now I can stand for an hour or an hour & 20. So I still have my limits. I'm not fully recovered. I still need to sit down. I can stand for like an hour in the morning, little bit longer in the afternoon and evening, but I need to sit for half an hour to recharge in between that. But in that time I'm sitting, I can do some reading or writing. So I really hated missing a day, losing a day of when you can improve yourself and be productive, that was really one of the hard things for me with this illness, because I'm an active person, I like to get stuff done. One of the other messages was, "don't focus on your symptoms, focus on your recovery," and, "don't focus on what you can't do, focus on what you can do," which is, again, easier said than done, because what you can do is really small. I kept really positive and, took that as wins. Like every fortnight I can do a little bit more, a little bit more, and a little bit more. From going from having to not just sit, but sit still and hardly move, to now like every morning I'm doing three sets of 30 squats or lunges, and I'm doing, three sets of 30 pushups every second day and yeah, my aim is to walk 20,000 steps a day, and I'm doing that probably four or five times a week. So, you know, little by little it's becoming a lot! And I know I've still got a long way to go.

Toby: Yes and no. I mean, that's pretty wild, man, to go from bedbound, what, a year ago? In a pretty desperate state, to be honest. And now you're going out for 20,000-step walks and you're training like a normal person would, even more than a normal person does sometimes, you know?

Jop: Yeah. Well, 20,000 steps in a day, not per walk. 20,000 steps per walk is a long way! I'm not doing that! My goal for each day is to get through the day, and I'm kind of like reverse roles with my wife now: she's working, and I'm doing a lot of the cooking and cleaning and getting kids to school.

Toby: Full-time dad.

Jop: Yeah. Yeah, yeah. So so my aim is to get through every day, do the cooking and cleaning and get kids to school and pick them up and help them with homework, and then in the evening still have the energy to go for an hour

power walk. Life is good now.

Toby: So good man. I'm bloody almost tearing up. I almost cried! Don't make me do this. Don't make me cry! Oh, wow.

Jop: I know I still have my limits. So recently, or last time I expanded my baseline, I can do like an hour 20 in the evening. I did a walk that went for an hour, 15 minutes, I think it was 7.2 kilometers, and normally I'd been doing about 6, 6.5km. So just doing an extra kilometer or an extra 10 or 15 minutes, and I felt it the next day. I felt fatigued, and I didn't have the energy to go and do a power walk that night, but one of the great learnings is knowing your limits, and knowing when you've done too much, and knowing when you need to pull back. I don't wanna go back to where I was a year ago, so, if that means not going for a walk for a day or two, then...

Toby: Not a big deal. Now for you as well, now that you've progressed to this new level, you know, really stage three, you know, integrating back into life, healthy people don't walk for an hour every day. Healthy people don't go to the gym every day. They have rest days in between. And that's how you need to start to see it now, because you progressed so far, and knowing that that's normal tiredness too, you know, after a gym session, the next day you will feel a bit tired. I spoke to a friend the other day who's never experienced chronic fatigue syndrome, and it's just like, "oh my God, my legs are so sore from yesterday's session. Oh, my arms are so sore from my surf two days ago, like, maybe I'll surf in like two more days." You know what I mean? So it's amazing, man. Like you've just come such a long, bloody way from where you were. And I think it's just so inspiring for people, because a lot of people don't have hope, and a lot of people are thinking that there's nothing that they can do, and a lot of people in the situation that you were in a year ago are still waiting for that magic pill. They're still hoping that there's something outside out there, over there, that's gonna magically come and fix them overnight. What would you like to say to them, you know, if you'd like to impart some wisdom?

Jop: You can recover. You can improve, you can feel better, if you make some changes. And you need to, I guess look at how you live your life: your habits, your diet, your sleep, your hydration, stress, mindset, yeah, definitely. Positive mindset. And if you can put all those things together, you'll start to recover. It's really hard, and I guess I wanna say that I'm fortunate in that I haven't had to go back to work, that I am not a single parent who has to look after kids, I'm fortunate and very thankful that I've got a really supportive family who've looked after me and helped me to recover. And I know not everyone has that and that's hard, and I can't imagine how hard it would be for people in that situation. But if you can make some changes, you can feel better.

Toby: What's your advice for people who are just having a bad day, you know what I mean? Like they're working on their recovery, it might be even people in

our program who have been going good for a couple weeks and then, you know, a couple of bad days happen. What's your advice to them to get through this bad day?

Jop: Just take it one day at a time. I'm sure I've got that written on one of my cards somewhere. One day at a time, one step at a time. You know, you have a bad day, that's okay. Just resolve to do better the next day. And you know, if you've had a bad day, what caused your bad day? How can you avoid that going forward? You know, if it's stress at work, hopefully there's a way you can avoid being so stressed. You can get more sleep, you can drink more water, you can rest more. Have your own little methods of staying calm and positive, whether it's your breathing exercises or a little bit of exercise, or reading a book, or watching a TV show. Do something that will help you to get out of your negative mindset, and start again the next day.

Toby: This is gold, by the way. Thank you so much for being here and just sharing this. On behalf of everyone who's listening right now, I think they're so thankful. You were in change management. You know, your expertise is change management. I feel like acceptance of one person's current struggle is possibly the hardest thing to change. You know, you got to the point where you were able to accept where you're at, in a pretty bad state, and that was really the pivotal moment for you, to go to the lowest bottom and kind of work your way back up. Have you got any advice for people who are just so struggling to accept where they're at? You know, like they're just not accepting where they're at. They're beating themselves up all the time and they're pushing themselves too hard or they're in self denial. You said to me before the call, "you know, I just got to the point, Toby, where I was just sick and tired of being sick and tired." Have you got any advice that people wanted to accept where they're at?

Jop: I guess my question would be, how bad do you wanna change? If your life is really shit, if you're feeling like shit every day, if you wanna change that, then you need to change. You need to look at yourself and figure out what you can change to make your health better, to avoid stress, to live a better life. How can you improve yourself? I'm just saying you gotta actually do it. And for me it was my cards. It was giving myself a message, not one message, but 50 messages every day to embrace the change. Talk myself through how I will get through the change and be the change. Cause I know change is hard for a lot of people, people are very resistant to change, but sometimes change is forced upon you. Like when you got sick, nobody wanted that change, but you can't really fight it. If you fight it, you end up worse. So change. You need to look at yourself and change, and also have the courage to ask for help. If you've got family and friends, there's always people that are offering help, but we're always too stubborn to say, "yes, I need help." People just say, "no, I'm fine. I can get through it." But if people are offering to help you cook a meal, or pick your kids up after school, then just say, "yes, thank you. Bloody hell, that would be

awesome!" Be grateful that people are helping you, and take it, take the help.

Toby: Almost like taking the guilt away from everything.

Jop: Yeah, I guess. Yeah. Don't feel guilty about being sick. No one's made you be sick, you know, it's not your fault. There's something that's triggered it and it's not your fault. You don't have to feel guilty about it, but you do have to work to recover, to get better. It's not just gonna happen. You can't just wait for a silver bullet to kill the chronic fatigue. There's no magic pill. You've gotta do some work. You've gotta be the change.

Toby: These two cards, I've got a big pile of cards for people who can't see the video, but I've got a big pile of cards. 60 quote cards that, our members get when they're inside our program. But two that came up on the top of the list. One: "Invest in yourself." you know, you quit the things that weren't helping, you invested in all the things that did help, and you invested in yourself every single day.

I saw your commitment, you know, I watched it. And I still see it now. You know what I mean? Like, you're just committed to a healthy lifestyle. And that's just amazing and then the other one is, "focus on what you want," you know, I think that's kind of what you're speaking to here, is really just focusing on what you want, and not focusing on what you don't want. And people always go, "I just need to focus on getting rid of this symptom, and then I need to focus on this symptom." I say, no, you don't need to focus on the symptoms, you need to focus on getting healthy. Because when you get healthy, your symptoms start to decrease. And so it's a deeper approach.

Jop: Yeah. And I really felt that one too, when you said "focus on recovery, not symptoms," and I would be journaling my symptoms, thinking about them, worrying about them, but when you stop doing that, it makes a difference. When you just think about what you've gotta do to recover, not what you're feeling, it makes a difference, and it's like a load off your shoulders, really. You can kind of take a big step forward after you accept that. And just going back to that previous question, I think people need to put their health as their number one priority. I did that and I guess I was fortunate to be in a position to do that financially and with support of family. People have to work, but if you can make your health your number one priority, focus on that, not focus on work and whether you're being present to friends or not. Focus on yourself, not stuff that's gonna make you feel worse.

Toby: Yeah. And even if you have to work, or you don't have the flexibility all the time, just find the moments where you can put yourself first. You know, it doesn't have to be all or nothing. And, you know, just focus on what you can

control, at the end of the day, that's all you can do. There's a lot of people out here who are listening to this, watching this, and, you know they're wondering if the program is gonna work for them. Like, can they trust it? Is it the right thing? Some people are even skeptical. What would you say to those people who are in the program right now or are thinking about joining the program?

Jop: I would say the program works. Listen to the learnings, take it all on board, and if you do the work, you can recover. Be committed to yourself, it can happen. And I was skeptical a year ago, or a little bit more than a year ago, but do the work and it will happen.

Toby: Dude, we're gonna leave it there. Nothing more powerful could be said right there. Do the work, and make it happen. I love it. You're speaking my language. Jop, thank you, on behalf of everyone at CFS Health, the members of the team, and all the extended community, just thank you so much for sharing your journey, and your insights. It's been so helpful and powerful.

Jop: Yeah, great. Thanks for having me. I hope, hope what I've been through can help others and people can learn from what I've learned.

Toby: Yeah, absolutely, 100%. Thanks heaps, man. We'll stay in touch. Speak to you soon.

Jop: Okay. Thanks, Toby!

Toby: See you, dude, thanks heaps.

Hey, I hope this video was really helpful for you. If you haven't already, please hit the like button and feel free to leave a comment: what was your takeaway, your insight from today's video? It's really helpful to actually write your learnings down. We seem to embed it better and it seems to help us move forwards with life.

Here are three ways we can help you right now, whenever you are ready:

The First way is make sure you add yourself into our free information recovery group on Facebook. We'll leave a link in the description below. It's a really supportive, encouraging place. There's no negative venting, you can ask questions to other people. There's something like 7,000, 8,000 people in there right now, and I'm sure by the time you're watching this video, there's even more. So go over there right now. We share success stories, we share our latest free trainings that come to the public, and we always share upcoming information about upgrades inside our program, and also when we offer free webinars or free information nights that can further help you with your own recovery.

The Second way we can help you, which is one of my favorite, is through all our free trainings. We're gonna leave a link in the description with our favorite free trainings that we know can help you start your recovery, whether that's through our baseline training, which will help you stop pushing and crashing, our three stages of recovery, to figure out exactly where you're at and know what to do next, or my favorite, which is our guest panel workshop, which was actually exclusive for our members. It was so damn good that I actually asked them, "can we share this to the public?" They all said yes, all five of them. So thank you, past members! They share their five recovery secrets and it's really powerful. There's tears, there's "aha" moments, there's real key insight and inspiration. And so whether you're a 1/10 and you're really struggling right now, or whether you are further along in your recovery journey and you are integrating back into life, we have you covered.

The Third way we can help you is through our actual paid online recovery program, the Mentorship Recovery Program. And if you are interested in getting proper help, a holistic, comprehensive plan, professional coaching from the best coaches in the world- whether that's with mindset, movement, nutrition, restorative movement, reconditioning, integrating back into life, integrative medicine, baseline, structure, routine, accountability, all things health and life- feel free to apply for the program today. All you need to do is click on the form, CFShealth.com/form. Fill out the short two to three minute form application, and the team will be in touch with all the details that you need to know about the program via email.

So make sure you check your spam folder for all the free trainings. If you've sent through an application, please be patient. My team are real people, okay? They're not robots. So if we don't get back to you within seconds or hours, it's okay. We will get back to you! If you don't hear from the team within two to three days, that means that it's basically gone to spam or junk and it's gone missing, so please send a follow up email to the team at info@cfshealth.com. If you have any questions, go check it out, but I would highly recommend adding yourself into the free group right now, go click on that link in the description. Go download all the free trainings. Honestly, the whole reason why this whole thing started is because when I went through this myself, it was so painful and so excruciating that I didn't want anyone else to have to go through it.

And some of these free trainings are so damn valuable, back then I would've paid thousands of dollars for them. We've had so many comments and emails and posts saying, "oh my God, the baseline training was a game changer for me." "Toby, I've been doing this now for three months and I'm feeling so much better, my symptoms are decreasing, I've got more stamina, I've got more energy, I'm able to do more things." So, you know, whether you are learning from us and consuming our content through our free format, I'm so stoked. Whether that's in our paid program, I don't really care either way. All I want to

make sure is that you are moving forwards, you are starting to really implement this work. And that's really what it's all about. Once we implement, we make change, and we start to move forwards. Sending you a ton of love. Of course feel free to consume as much of the YouTube videos as you like. There's so many really, really great ones, new and old. Sending you a ton of love and speak to you very, very soon.

All the best for now.