

How running saved my life.

by [Andreas Michaelides](#)

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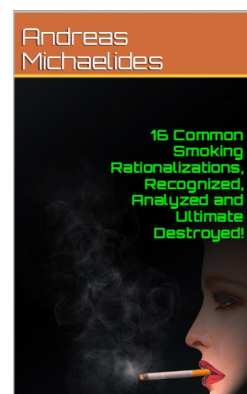
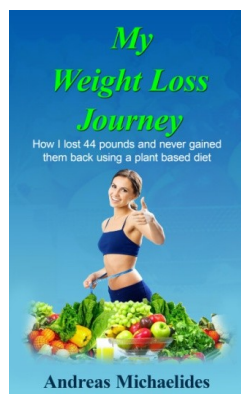
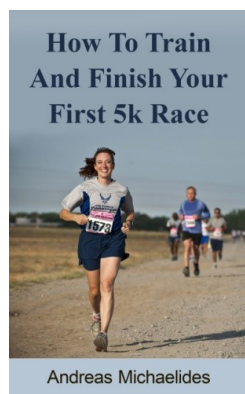
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Find more about me and my books at my
webpage www.thirsty4health.com

Please register to my mailing list and get three of my books



FREE!

About The Author.

[Andreas](#) was born in Athens, the city that gave birth to Democracy, in Greece, the country that taught to the world how to live, think, and have fun. He grew up on the beautiful island of Cyprus.

With both of his parent's bibliophiles (and his father a high school teacher), Andreas grew up with a love and appreciation for literature. In addition to the books he borrowed from the school library, a stack of encyclopedias taught him about the world. A history lover from age 13, he devoured the memoirs of Winston Churchill and Charles de Gaul, and by age 17, he had read all of Julius Vern's books.

After serving his country for 26 months immediately after finishing high school, Andreas studied in Patra, Greece to become a computer engineer. With his Master of Computer Engineering and Informatics, he began working in the Informatics Department of the local university hospital and started reading again with a vengeance.

In 2004, Andreas authored his first book, a historical novel that has not yet seen the light of publication. Leaving it unpublished made him feel like a failure, but a lot has changed since then. Eleven years later, he has successfully [quit smoking](#) and has been smoke-free for the past seven years. He has also started running again and managed to lose 26 kg (57 lbs).

Andreas has run three marathons, as well as many half-marathons and other shorter races. His [love for running](#) is what renewed him and actually saved his life.

Multiple medical problems pushed Andreas to research and experiment with a plant-based diet; since 2013 he is following a [whole plant based diet](#).

In addition to running, Andreas enjoys hiking, cycling, playing basketball, camping, photography, and going out with friends and family and having a good time.

You can follow the writer at his web page www.thirsty4health.com and blog <http://thirsty4health.com/blog>

Tiny Revelations

There are moments, instances, short time periods, brief encounters with other people, small or big events that, at the time didn't mean much to you, register any information, or leave an emotional foot print on you right away.

It's when you find the time, or something or someone makes you find the time and reflect on those moments, that's when you realize how important that moment was for you and sometimes how it saved your life.

I have many of those moments, life and near death moments. Now if this is right or wrong, I let you be the judge.

Elementary School

When I was in elementary school, all the boys in the school loved to play soccer. Oh, my goodness, I don't remember doing anything else but playing football on our breaks while in school.

I was good at it; everyone said that I was an excellent defensive player especially in our area. I seldom passed the center of the field; I was always making sure no one passed my defense line.

This trend of all the boys playing soccer all the time continued at high school, well into the first 3 years of it.

Greece Super Power!

In 1987, Greece's national basketball team beat the mighty USSR in the European championship final and all the kids in Greece and all the Greeks around the globe wanted to become like the basketball players who won the champion. Basketball started to become more famous and I remember that I stopped playing football and switch to basketball. I even made it to the high school basketball team even though I was very short for a basketball player but I was fast and I could jump high enough.

Shaping Athletic Education

I am telling you all this, so you get an idea of my psyche. I have loved sports since I was a kid and all the sports I played had a basis in running.

If you want to play soccer, you need to run and use your feet. In basketball, it's the other way around, you need to run and use your legs. You can see now why sports and athletics make people smarter because they make you use different moves and props at the same time, you need to be synchronized with the status of the game and with your teammate, and you need to coordinate your moves to win.

Synapses are created in your brain every time you are faced with something new and every time you find a way to master it.

Running is My “Religion”

My favorite sport though was running, and it will be until I breathe my last breath on this beautiful green, blue ball.

I started running because my father told me a story about how when he was a student in high school he won a second or a third place in one of the high school races. I describe this incident in my first book, *Thirsty for Health*, a lot because it is one of those incidents that I didn't think of much when it happened, that was not something that registered in my head as important.

Now though, looking back, I can see that if my dear father had never told me his story, I would never have started running and I probably wouldn't be here to tell you my story today.

Athletic Accomplishments

I did well when I finished with high school. I had a second place in 6,000 meters that was held between other athletes in my school. The first place in 1,000 meters and this was among the high schools in the area, so that was cool to me, and the third place in 1,000 meters again in the same event.

I was good. Without proper training and running just on sheer will alone, I would run 3k in 10 minutes and I was only 14 years old; I was still growing, my lungs were still developing!

Turkish Invasion

Unfortunately in 1974, Turkey invaded Cyprus, illegally occupying the north part of the island, 37% of the area, and about 70% of the economic resources of the island. Turkish soldiers did what they knew best through the centuries and had been doing since the Ottoman Empire, the same thing they did with Armenians. They raped and killed women and children and helpless old people in cold blood.

180,000 people were made refugees in their own country and, of course, no one did anything about it because Cyprus didn't have any oil and gas so the “big” countries will not come to our aid.

Because of this ongoing situation, all able male Greeks who live in Cyprus must to serve their military service after finishing high school because otherwise, we wouldn't have enough manpower to man the posts if everyone went to study first.

Military Service

I did 26 months of military service. I was a second lieutenant in the antitank division, and I am proud I served. The army made me smarter, and harder, and taught me a lot of lessons about life.

Army life is not that different from regular life; it makes you realize in a very short period that if you want to get things done, do them yourself. You don't wait for anyone to do it for you.

The only thing I regret about the military service is that I started smoking when I was still serving at the age of 19 and continued smoking until the age of 35. After 16 years, when I realized what an idiot I was, I took matters on my own hands and I did something about it.

[Life in Greece](#)

I am writing a book about my smoking escapades and how I managed to quit. Also, I have a whole chapter about smoking in my first book, [Thirsty for Health](#).

After the army, I went and studied at the University of Patras in the computer engineering and informatics department, one of the best computer departments in the country.

I stayed in Greece studied and worked for 11 years, where I continued smoking, of course, and also managed to give myself a series of illnesses along the track of my digestive system and all of this was because of inadequate nutrition.

[Back to Cyprus](#)

In 2005, I came home, back to the island. I was doing a lot of jobs. At one point, I had 4 jobs.

I still smoked cigarettes, and ate anything and everything except coffee. That was the only thing I gave up after the doctor told me about my severe case of stomach ulcer.

I remember telling him, "I'll give you coffee but not smoking!" Yeah, I was an ignorant little man.

So at the age of 34, I was overweight, a smoker, depressed, my digestive system was dangerously under functioning, and to make a long story short, my health was in pieces.

[Quit Smoking](#)

Turning 35, I did something important, one of those moments I was telling you about at the start of this little book. I managed to quit smoking. My method of choice was not chewing gum or nicotine gum or electronic cig, it was cold turkey. For me, it's the only way you have a fighting chance to stop smoking and never take another puff in your life.

So, yes, looking back, quitting smoking and also quitting smoking with my father, who was a 42-year massive chain smoker, was one of the first acts I felt proud of.

When I stopped smoking, I did it on sheer will and stubbornness. There is so much information I know now about smoking, mainly because of all the research I am doing for my book about smoking. If I knew it when I stopped 7 years ago, I know it would have been easier for me to quit.

Weight Gain

One of the things I didn't handle after I quit smoking was weight gain and how nicotine was feeding me intravenously all these years. So the calories I was getting from my liver, I now had to get from my mouth.

What I did not know back then was this procedure that was taking place every time I was smoking.

Let me tell you what happens when you eat something. After you chew your food, preferably well, it goes to the stomach where the stomach starts to produce, among many other things hydrochloric acid to dissolve the food and then push it to the small intestines where the bulk of the nutrient absorption happens. From the time you eat something, it takes about 20 minutes for the glycogen to hit your blood stream. It is that slow, that's why it's a good tactic to eat when we start feeling hungry.

Nicotine Effect

Nicotine, on the other hand, as soon as it enters our body, is making the liver release glycogen and fat into our blood, feeding, as I said, intravenously, instantly.

After I stopped smoking, the calories I was taking because of the nicotine effect had to be consumed anyway. That's why people who quit smoking eat like crazy. It is not just to do something with their hands, but it is also a matter of calories that needs to be met using the traditional way, now through our mouth.

Ignorance is not Bliss

I did not know this, so I did not plan a preventive dietary plan to eat food that was A) better for me nutritionally wise, and B) will help me not gain weight.

Instead, I was eating all the junk food and liquids you can think of, and exactly a year after I stop smoking, I was 94 kilos, and I was severely flirting with obesity.

Like I describe in my first book, *Thirsty for Health*, one day, I saw myself in the mirror after I got out of the shower and I was shocked at how ugly and fat I was. I think, in all of our minds, we are still young and beautiful and fit and sexy. In protecting us from the cruel reality, our minds sometimes doesn't let us see what's in front of us.

You see what you want to see.

It's like one friend of mine once told me, and he made me think, he said, "Whenever you see your face in the mirror, you don't think, *oh, I am older*, or *I am getting old*. It is when other people point out the gray hair or the baldness or the wrinkles that you start to wake up."

So for the first time in a long time, I saw how I was in reality, and I was disgusted by my physique.

In my head, I was still that lean, mean sexy machine I used to be in high school and I was running like the wind and then some.

I needed to do something

That's when I decided that I needed to do something; this was unacceptable.

So I started running. I was walking at first, and then there was a transition period where I will walk and run, and then it was pure running.

When I started running, though it was based only on vanity, I saw running as a way to lose kilos and the extra weight and then stop running.

Back then, I didn't know anything about the lifestyle, commitment, metabolism, nutrition, and so much more.

So I started running. In the first 6 to 8 months, I lost 18 kilos!

I was 76 kilos and for the next 2 years, I would run, without exaggeration, a half-marathon every day. Not refueling with electrolytes appropriately and also not having any nutrition program had taken a toll on my body. As a result, I plateaued at 76 kilos and that's when I was considering quitting. I mean, I was slim again and what was the point of continuing?

Runner's High!

Well, I tell you what the point was. I got hooked, I got, and still have, the runner's high. I loved participating in races and running events and "worst" of all, I got the competitive bug back, the same "selfish" winner attitude bug I had as a teenager.

My focus shifted from losing the weight and I concentrated on improving my personal records and optimizing my performance.

It took me 2 years to settle down to a nutritional regime and also training and recovery exercises.

Trial and Error

I learned through trial and error and also through reading numerous books about nutrition. Most of them were around the topic of plant-based diets and lifestyle, that meat is not what seems to be. Meat and animal products are not good for you. Another culprit I removed from my diet was

refined and heavily processed food. It does not matter if they came from animals or plants, I started cutting them from my diet, and I noticed a considerable change in my sleep patterns, the energy I had, and most important of all, I felt better, lighter, and younger!

[Running, My Savior!](#)

Running saved my life because it helped me beat my chronic depression. When you exercise, you are better able to manage stress because good “hormones” and substances are released that help you relax.

Also, it helped me lose all that sick weight I was carrying like a life vest around my waist.

Losing all that weight reduced the possibility of me getting some chronic diseases, most of them fatal. Most of them turn your quality of life into a waking nightmare.

I managed to escape type 2 diabetes, heart conditions, strokes, gout, kidney stones, and intestinal cancer. The list is endless.

Running helped me realize, through experimentation and severe intensive research, that animal products are not healthy for you, that our digestive system is designed and optimized for the whole plant-based diet, not dead flesh.

My second book, [The Food I Grew Up With...Veganized!](#), shows my philosophy and way of thinking and attitude when I managed to transform the food I grew up with, which was filled with animal products, into a clean, ethical, cruelty-free food.

[Lots of Fiber](#)

We evolved to consume 100grams of fiber a day! Eating something that does not have any fiber at all is not logical, like meat, dairy products, fish, seafood, and so on.

Now I am a whole plant-based diet consumer, and I haven't had the flu since then, as I described earlier I am fit as a fiddle, and my energy reserves are significantly increased. Sometimes I feel like the Duracell bunny in the commercial about the battery.

Running also helped see how stupid I was, killing myself for 16 years by inhaling 4,000 chemicals, 60 of which are proven to be carcinogens. And, nicotine is a natural pesticide! Yes, you heard right, nicotine is the tobacco plant's natural defense mechanism against bugs!

I was putting a pesticide in my blood. How stupid was I? The answer is *very!*

[Stay Away from Processed Food](#)

Running helped me realize that eating refined and processed food was not the best practice. I remove white sugar, white salt, white flour, white rice, and milk that comes from animals from my diet. I replaced the white sugar with more natural sweeteners like dates and Blackstrap

Molasses. I replaced white salt with Himalayan salt (pink), white flour with whole wheat flour, white rice with brown or wild rice, and milk that comes from animals with plant-based milk like almond milk, which is my favorite, and soya milk.

I put this transformation on paper in my latest book, [*My Weight Loss Journey: How I Lost 44 Pounds and Never Gained Them Back by Using a Plant-based Diet.*](#)

[*Solves My Daily Problems*](#)

Running helps me solve my daily problems, and helps me relax and find solutions to dead ends. Running keeps me in touch with our mother, our beautiful planet, especially when I am running into the forest in uncharted trails!

Running keeps my immune system in top shape, and that's the most important thing of all.

Let me tell you a secret. You don't get sick because a virus or a bacteria gets into your body, that's erroneous thinking of Western medicine so they will sell you a shit load of drugs.

We are swimming in bacteria and viruses. Even in the most sterile of environments, there are billions of those little suckers in us around us everywhere! I know I am not helping people with microbephobia, but it's the truth.

[*Why We Get Sick*](#)

We get sick because the immune system, for some reason, drops its defense and bacteria and viruses grab the opportunity to do what are they designed to do: multiply, reproduce, and then die.

Having a healthy immune system is the key. Running is one of the best sports to achieve that, and a whole plant-based diet that is also alkaline in nature, which is what our blood wants.

If you want to start running, you can always check out my book, [*How to Train and Finish Your 5k Race.*](#)

I hope I helped you to think of how your life is and how you want your life to be and to tell you everything is possible if you take action and shape yourself into the person you have in your mind. If you feel puzzled now, either you exercise or don't, then that's a good thing. It means I managed to plant the seed of doubt in you, which is always the start of searching and researching, which I think is the healthiest thing a person can do. Search and experiment, do not believe and stay idle.

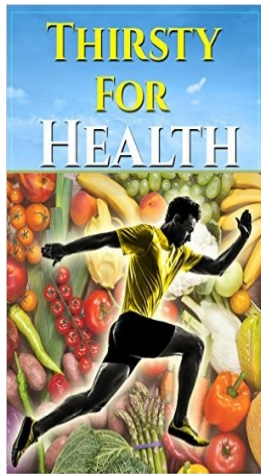
Have a healthy and happy day!

My warmest regards,

[Andreas Michaelides](#)

[Other books by Andreas Michaelides](#)

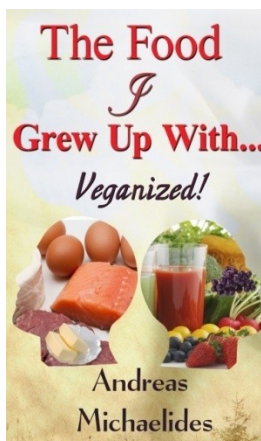
Thirsty For Health



Andreas Michaelides

A true eye-opening book that should and will make you question yourself and everything you have done so far diet and lifestyle wise. Obesity, caffeine, and junk food addiction, smoking and digestive problems? This is the place you can start answering your most asked questions. A book you wish you had found earlier, an amazing story that had to be told in order to help others not to go through the same misery. In these pages, you will learn how to regain control over your life, how to find strength from within in order to go through life's numerous challenges, successfully overcome addictions and finally tune into genuine health and happiness. You are the alchemist, the architect of your life and no one else but you have the power to make the change. Be the change that you want to see in the world. You can start now and this book will help you do that and more and you will also learn how to live long and live well.

The Food I Grew Up With...Veganized!



Andreas
Michaelides

I wrote this book first to thank my mother for never letting me without food on the table and secondly to show to people out there that they can thrive on a plant-based diet

and the most important of all they don't have to start from zero as food is concerned I hope I will show with this book that you can transform many of your old food into new versions of plant based ones. This book is not a cookbook although it contains a lot of the food recipes I used to and still eating today. All the recipes are a result of many interviews with my mother which without her this book would never be possible. This book basically shows one aspect of my psyche as food is concerned and how I deal with it transitioning from an omnivore to a herbivore.

How to train and finish your first 5k race.



Andreas Michaelides

You can watch other people running on the TV, playing football, basketball, or baseball. At least those guys are getting paid to run and jump and tackle. Why should you go through this torture of actually getting up from your soft chair and making yourself go through this ordeal? Why would you enter this nightmare? Why not continue your ignorant bliss of a lovely sedentary life where all you need to do is push the buttons of a remote control and then people in the box can live your desires, your fantasies, your dreams, and ultimately, your life?

My weight loss journey: How I lost 44 pounds and never gained them back using a plant based diet.



Although I never expected to drag myself out of the house and go for a run, after I finished those first three rounds at the high school track in my village, everything changed. I was so exhausted—which was an indicator of how lacking my physical fitness was—but after all the discomfort, itching, and rash in various places due to friction from excess fat, for the first time, I felt renewed, and memories of running and coming in first place in high school reminded me of how I used to be compared to how I was after those three laps around the track. It made my eyes water; I was alone in the middle of the track under an April sky full of stars when tears of mixed feelings started pouring down from my eyes. Emotionally and psychologically, it was a turning point for me, and it also made me even more determined to become that lean, mean running machine I used to be. It was right there in that single moment that I saw the path I had to follow.

Please write a review.

I consider myself as a person that wants to think that I am constantly improving my books, my work and myself. I am always trying to deliver to my readers the best quality and current information out there as my area of interest and expertise is a concern which is Health, Nutrition, and Exercise.

In order to accomplish that I need feedback from you and the only feedback, I know that will help me achieve a relative perfection in all areas of my life is your valuable reviews so I know where I am wrong or where I have made mistakes and errors.

There is no such thing as a perfect book out there, perfection for one person is a sloppy work for other, so in order to satisfy as much as people out there my books need to be updated regularly and it doesn't matter if it's in electronic form or paperback form.

If you found this book useful, please leave your review with all your thoughts, don't hold back, it will only take a few minutes of your time.

If you didn't like this book, please let me know by contacting me and I will give my best shot to fix the issue.

Thank you very much,

My warmest regards

[Andreas Michaelides](#)