



Help me, Karen!

Karen Gatt, author of *The Clothesline Diet*, shares her weigh-loss tips with readers for the next three weeks

Q Last year I had an abdominoplasty and breast reduction, but a couple of months after the procedures I gained 20kg. I'm now 128kg – the biggest I've ever been. I feel like a failure and I can't lose this weight on my own. What can I do?
Catherine, 25, Q.

A You aren't a total failure. You did what you thought was right at the time, and you were very brave to take the steps you did. You should consider them as an achievement. Now you need to move forward and treat your past as a learning experience. Start over and go back to basics, which means believing in yourself, having faith that your dreams and goals can come true, and looking to the future. If you can think and feel this way you're on the right track, and you certainly can do this on your own – no one else can do it for you. If you're considering this type of surgery, it should only be after maintaining your weight for at least six months.

Q I know I need to exercise, but I get so puffed I feel like my head will burst.
Lyn, 59, NSW.

A Take it slowly and don't be afraid to rest, take deep breaths, sip some water and try again. Every step you take is a step closer to your goal. Give your body time to get used to exercise and gradually build it up until you feel you can handle larger blocks of time, such as 20 minutes. Don't push yourself to the point where you find it hard to breathe, but you do need to work at a pace that's a little faster than normal. Before starting a new exercise plan, have a GP check your blood pressure.

Q I have no willpower when it comes to losing weight. How do I get it?
Tania, 16, V.

A I believe that everyone has the power to achieve anything. For some of us, it's just tucked a little deeper inside and we need to believe in ourselves to coax it out. It all depends on how much you want to achieve your dream, and willpower comes naturally if you believe you can do it. I've always said the only thing standing in the way of my weight loss was me.

CLOTHING BY TARGET OPTIONS PLUS AND MY SIZE

CASE STUDY

| MAREE | RENEE |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| Was: 117kg, size 24 | Was: 107kg, size 20 |
| Now: 87kg, size 18 | Now: 93kg, size 16 |
| Lost: 30kg | Lost: 14kg |

● Schoolteacher Maree Scott and her 15-year-old daughter Renee believed they were both destined to be overweight for life until they saw an advertisement for Karen Gatt's support group in their local paper.

'I thought I'd be fat forever,' Maree, 47, says. 'I'd read about Karen, but I'd never been able to pluck up the courage to go along. But I was desperate and Renee also needed to lose weight, so we went together.'

The pair are now well on the way to reaching their goal weights. The secret of their success is controlled portion sizes and regular

exercise. Maree and Renee began walking for a few minutes each day, then conquered two blocks of their neighbourhood and are now walking up to 12km a day.

Since they started losing weight, the duo can't believe how much their lives have changed. 'I look in the mirror and I feel good,' Maree says.

'I wasn't sociable, now I want to get out and live. I was depressed about my size, but Karen has lifted my self-esteem,' Renee adds.

'We keep each other motivated. It's the best thing we've ever done.'



Renee and Maree have lost more than 40kg.

Write to Karen at: PO Box 2009, Brimbank Central Post Office, Deer Park, Vic 3023 or visit www.theclotheslinedietclub.com.au.
Karen's latest book is *Why Can't I Lose Weight?*