



Karen Gatt author of *The Clothesline Diet Club* has reason to smile.

Picture: GEOFF FOLETTA N13MT100

Karen's line to success

By Paige Hawkett

KAREN Gatt's clothesline has changed her life in more ways than one.

She lost 67kg in just 13 months on her "clothesline diet", turned her success into a bestselling book and has inspired thousands to follow in her footsteps.

The Burnside mother of two weighed in at 136kg five years ago and was too ashamed and embarrassed to walk down the street, so she began to walk around her clothesline.

Ms Gatt said she walked around the clothesline for five minutes at a time and then gradually increased the time to 20 minutes.

She now weighs in at 69kg and has helped hundreds of others shed weight on her clothesline diet.

Proud of her efforts, Ms Gatt wrote a book *The Clothesline Diet* about her struggle with obesity and

how she finally overcame the hurdle and lost weight.

She said the book depicted the trauma she went through as a child, the agony of trying IVF because she could not conceive naturally and the devastation of separating from her husband Jason for 11 months.

Ms Gatt said the book was a

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bestseller in six weeks and her second book, released earlier this month, follows the lives of others who have succeeded on the clothesline diet.

She said the second book also tackled the subject of childhood obesity.

“Parents need to be aware of

their children becoming obese,” Ms Gatt said.

“My struggle started when I was four years old and as I grew, so did my troubles.”

Ms Gatt said she received hundreds of letters a week from readers who struggle with their weight.

She even runs weight loss

support groups in Deer Park and Werribee.

Ms Gatt said she was living proof that people did not have to spend money on expensive gym memberships or join weight loss programs.

“It's all about common sense.

“Sometimes I can't believe I was that person.

“But then I thank her because it was her that made me become the person I am today.”

And since turning her life around Ms Gatt has had two children and reunited with husband, Jason. They recently renewed their wedding vows.

“We tried to keep the wedding as close to the original as possible.

“I got my size 32 wedding dress, which I wore when I was 18 and had it altered to a size 12. I was so proud to wear that dress again,” she said.

“And yes I still walk around my clothesline.”

■ The Deer Park support group is held each Monday at 7pm at Sassella Park and the Werribee group is held each Friday at 7pm at the Werribee Heath Primary School.

The Clothesline Diet and *The Clothesline Diet Club*, published by Pan McMillan, are available from all bookstores.