



# DEAR *Annie...*

Got an emotional dilemma preventing you from losing weight? Confidence coach Annie Ashdown could help...

## *'Yo-yo dieting gets me down'*

**Q** My weight has fluctuated all my life. I'm a size 16 now, but I want to be a size 10 again. I get depressed when I think about how slim I used to be, so how can I motivate myself to lose weight?

**Dawn, Southampton**

**A** The bottom line is this; are you willing to go to any lengths? Check with a nutritionist if you are refined carbohydrate-sensitive, as this often leads to irritability, tiredness and depression. Clinical and experimental research shows there is often a relationship between moods and foods, so quit repeating the same behaviour and expecting different results. If you want success, make a commitment to Dawn, not anyone else. This is a decision you make once and have no intention of reconsidering. Honour yourself daily by sticking to it, take it one day at a time, and stop looking for reasons not to keep this promise to yourself, or ways to get around it. You are worth it!



## CAN I FIND TRUE LOVE?

**Q** I'm 26, am a size 20, and want to meet someone who will love me for me.

Everyone says I have a bubbly personality but that doesn't seem to be enough to attract a man. I know losing weight will help but sometimes I get so down I just hide away and eat. How can I become more confident and get the figure I want?

**Amy, London**

**A** Firstly how can you expect a man to love you when you don't love you? To raise your self-esteem, it's time to face your fears rather than be paralysed by them. You must lose weight because you want to do it for you, not for a man. Nothing is sustainable if it is done for someone else. Recognise your strengths as well as your weaknesses and trade self-criticism and self-loathing for self-acceptance and self-love. Try answering these questions: What are your personal needs right now? What is really important to you? How can you create a life that is full and rewarding? What are your goals? Stop being addicted to approval from others and you'll start losing weight because you choose to.

## *'Why compromise?'*

**Q** Recently, my doctor told me I need to lose 3st. I'm finding it hard to come to terms with weight loss – why should I change because of some perceived idea of what my body should look like?

**Charlotte, Canterbury**

**A** I'm very much in support of believing every woman is a divine goddess whatever weight, shape, colour or age. However,

if you are carrying an excess of 3st, tell me honestly, do you feel energised? Are you toned up and taut? Are you glowing with radiant health? If you carry a lot of extra pounds, you are actually overloading your system with too many toxins and not taking action to burn off calories – so the fat stays put. By doing a combination of Pilates, body pump and cardio, and developing a balanced food plan, you can lose weight but still maintain your gorgeous feminine curves.



## 'I love food too much!'

**Q** I try to eat healthily but like the feeling of being full, so I've found it difficult to shift the pounds. Please don't tell me to stop eating cakes and biscuits – I don't actually eat them very much and I have plenty of fruit and vegetables. But the weight's not coming off and it's so disheartening.

Amanda, East Sheen



**A** This is not about deprivation, it is looking at what is and isn't working for you. You can feel full with pulses, tofu, wholegrain rice, rye bread, millet, oatcakes and roast vegetables and still lose weight. What are your portion sizes like? Do you nibble in between meals and snack a lot? Write a daily food plan, to help eliminate irrational eating and buy food in advance to heighten your awareness of what you are consuming and how much. Don't forget to combine adequate exercise with healthy eating, as this keeps your metabolism operating at an efficient rate.



## 'Can I keep my youthful looks?'

**Q** I've started losing weight but I'm petrified that it's going to make me look old. I've seen lots of women my age (I'm 54) who are now slim but look about 10 years older. I'm not sure whether I'd rather be fat than look old...

Helena, Banbury

**A** Do you have actual evidence that this will happen to you because it may have happened to others, or is it FEAR = False

Evidence Appearing Real? What's more important – a healthy fit energised body, which serves you well, or the fear of possibly acquiring a few lines? There are some amazing products on the market containing Omega 3, 6 and 9 oils, which do wonders for the skin, plumping up existing furrows and bringing a youthful glow. If we live in fear of what may or may not happen we don't move forward. We cannot be present in the moment when we are tripping on the future.

### HE THINKS DIETING IS SIMPLE

**Q** My husband says that if I really want to diet it's easy – I should just eat less. For me, it isn't easy at all. I do try to eat less, but I feel like I'm fighting a constant battle with my willpower. Help!

Susie, York

**A** Firstly, we do not change by being told to, or by feeling guilty. We change because we want to. Do you eat more than you need when nothing or no one else is there? Is food your hugs, kisses and best friend? Pull yourself out of the valley of despair and be gentle on yourself. Keep the autonomy within you because you are

your own expert! Take action to change, give as much energy to your intent as possible, be persistent, and get on with it! Action reinforces belief, which in turn supports action, and then your faith will grow. And one last point: cravings are triggered by mood changes and stress, and giving into them only makes them stronger.

About  
ANNIE

ANNIE ASHDOWN IS A CONFIDENCE COACH AND HYPNOTHERAPIST, SPECIALISING IN WEIGHT ISSUES. ANNIE WAS THE COACH FOR KYLE'S ACADEMY ON ITV1 WITH JEREMY KYLE AND IS A REGULAR CONTRIBUTOR TO NATIONAL NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES. FOR MORE INFO: ANNIEASHDOWN.COM, 07739 388072