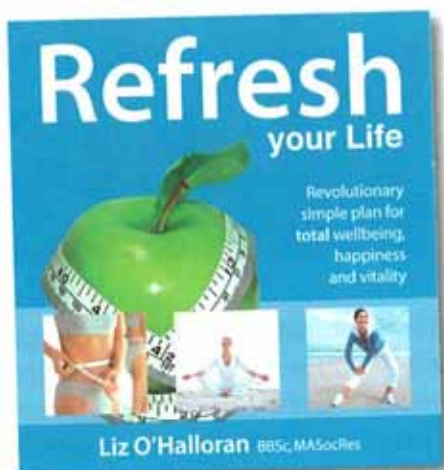


The Secrets of 'Miss Fitness'



We chat to a 'Miss Fitness' turned author, Liz O'Halloran about her new book, *Refresh Your Life*.



Q What prompted you to write the book?

A: I wanted to create a program that could help people associate being fit and healthy with happiness, energy, self-confidence and motivation. After years of working and researching the area, I became acutely aware that as a nation we are putting on more and more weight, yet there has never been more information available on how to lose weight and exercise. In all my research I kept coming across the same thing – diets and exercise programs that missed the essential emotional and mental ingredients necessary to sustain a healthy, fit and happy life.

Of course there are various professionals who are very qualified to assist people in this area, such as counsellors, personal trainers and life coaches. However, many of us simply don't have the money to pay all

these professionals to help us improve our lives. I decided to create the 'affordable' alternative.

Q There are so many diet and lifestyle books on the market, what is different about yours?

A: The problem with [other] programs is that people learn to associate eating healthy and regular exercise with pain – they create a very negative association.

Research has shown that the brain works by wanting to make us feel good. That's the problem, with these negative associations – you can sustain them for a short time, but it's really hard to do so over a long period of time, because no-one wants to subject themselves to painful experiences over and over again.

The *Refresh Your Life* program is different because people are not being deprived of anything. It's the first program to provide a framework for people to eat healthy foods and gradually increase their physical activity in a way that associates feeling good with healthy behaviours.

Q What is the basis of the plan?

A: The program runs for 30 days (4 weeks) and the premise is – 30 days to develop and sustain new healthy habits you can maintain for life.

It includes:

- Morning meditations, mini morning boost activities to build strength and flexibility;

- A gradual physical activity planner that is easy to follow, enjoyable and sustainable;
- Delicious and varied eating plan for inner health - designed to manage hunger and boredom;
- Daily relaxation/stress relief techniques; and
- Daily personal achievement techniques to improve social relationships, increase confidence and reduce emotional eating, fear and anxiety.

Q What is your favourite de-stress technique?

A: I utilise the techniques in the CD that comes free with the *Refresh Your Life* program - to meditate and relax. By meditating just a few minutes every morning I am able to set the course for my day and feel much more in control of my emotions.

Q How do you keep fit?

A: I train six days a week (combining walking, weights and Pilates) and have one complete rest day. I am a big advocate of walking at a moderate intensity. I walk five times a week and do Pilates either at home with a workout video, or at my gym on the sixth day. Occasionally I will substitute a walk for a cycle, just to mix things up a bit. I also train with weights three times a week to maintain bone density and for strength and toning my muscles. *