

WE'RE HALF OUR SIZE!

Meet our real-life slimmers who, together, have shed more than 280kg! Nicky, Sally, Lorelee and Mitch tell Lizzie Wilson their stories...



A determined Nicky says she's 'just getting started' in her weight-loss journey.

LOST 99.7KG
Start weight
198.7kg
Current weight
99kg



NICKY GALLAS, 40 **'I WAS SO OBESE I WALKED WITH CRUTCHES'**

She shed a whopping 100kg in 18 months and now there's no stopping her. 'I'm just getting started,' says the Alice Springs native. 'I'm going to get to 80 kilos and re-evaluate.'

Nicky has the heartless words of a stranger to thank for her wake-up call. 'I was with my husband Brenton at the casino enjoying the all-you-can-eat smorgasbord. I heard this man say to his wife: "Holy cow, they're going to lose money tonight!" and at that moment, I knew I had to do something,' she says.

Nicky lived in hiding for more than 20 years. 'I spent what should have been the best years of my life believing I was disgusting,' she says.

When Nicky was just 11, her father died of a heart attack and she dealt with the grief by comfort eating. She became so morbidly obese she had to get around on crutches.

'My daily calorie intake was well over 5000 [20,000kJ]. I ate hamburgers, chips, cakes, lollies, pies... And I'm not proud to admit it but I was a bottle-of-Bacardi-a-day girl,' she says.

No longer riddled with the serious health problems she had in her past, including two minor heart attacks, Nicky has one last dream. 'I'm ready to go through the surgery to get rid of the loose skin. A friend told me it's very painful, but I say bring it on!'

MY DIET SECRET

- A healthy diet rich in protein and low in carbs, with plenty of vegetables, chicken, lean meat and fish. Water is the drink of choice.
- Exercise is important but you don't have to go to the gym - walking everywhere works!

'I bought this big men's T-shirt and went to the gym. I've never looked back'



LOST 53.5KG

Start weight

106.5kg

Current weight

53kg

SALLY SYMONDS, 37 'I WAS EATING THREE CAKES A DAY'

Weighing a svelte 53kg, this little pocket rocket from Queensland only has one regret – that she didn't get to a gym earlier.

'I was the kid who would do anything to get out of PE! I loathed exercise and the idea of going to a gym gave me nightmares,' Sally says. 'I'm the girl who drove 150 metres to get to the letterbox, and yes, I hate to admit, I paid someone to walk my dog!'

Sally grew up with bad eating habits, having been sent to boarding school at the age of eight. 'Nutrition was not in my vocabulary. A normal day included three cakes, Red Rooster for dinner and litres of Coca-Cola,' she says.

The retired teacher is now enjoying her new career as trainer and author, and says it was a moment during her teaching days that kick-started her lifestyle change.

'I was turned down for a promotion. It made me realise there was no balance in my life,' she says. 'I know it was because of my appearance.'

It wasn't long after this that Sally decided enough was enough. 'I bought this big men's T-shirt, XXXL, and off I went to the gym,' she says. 'I've never looked back. I've trained hard, but it worked!'

Indeed, Sally's body looks like that of a 20-year-old beach babe. 'Really! That young? Wow, now that I can get used to,' laughs Sally who lost a total of 53.5kg, successfully halving her body weight.

Now Sally hopes her book *50 Steps to Lose 50kg... and Keep It Off* will inspire others. (To buy it, visit www.sallysymonds.com.)

MY DIET SECRET

- A diet very low in fat, low in carbs and high in protein, with regular physical exercise.
- With a bit of guidance and advice from someone who has done it, it's so much easier to lose the weight – and keep it off.



The turning point for this former school teacher was being turned down for a promotion.

Mick's photo: Photo from Anticorrupt; Photo from Diana Sures

"A relative once said to me I had a beautiful face, then added: "Shame about the body," Lorealee recalls.



LORALEE THOMAS, 40 'MY DOCTOR TOLD ME I'D DIE'

This lovable mum-of-two wasn't always the sleek, sexy woman she is today. Gold Coast glamour girl Lorealee blames her Latvian blood for the fact that she's spent most of her life as a self-confessed 'fatty boombah!' 'Leave it to the Latvians – we celebrate everything with food and lots of it! If you die, we eat. If you're born, we eat. We'll find any excuse to strike up a feast,' she laughs.

Weighing in at her heaviest at just one gram short of 128kg, Lorealee got the shock of her life after the birth of her second baby. 'My son Luca was only a few days old and we had Paris at home who was three. My doctor said to me if I didn't lose weight I would probably die. It was like the whole world stopped spinning and then I thought: "OK, that's not going to happen,"' she says with determination.

With the support of her husband Eric and family, Lorealee made changes. 'I found this great diet called the Medical Vita Diet. It worked for me. It's balanced and provides meal replacements,' she explains.

Lorealee admits she used to be a chronic over-eater. 'I lived on carbs – cereal, bread, pasta – high in sugar and fats,' she admits. 'I'm now completely the other way. Paris and Luca eat a balanced nutritional diet – they only have junk food at birthdays.'

So what are her tips? 'Some say a day at a time – my advice is one hour at a time and exercise for fun. It takes a lot of hard work but the results are so worth it,' she insists.

'I'm now a qualified personal trainer. My best advice – get as many belly laughs into your day as you can!'

MY DIET SECRET

- A balanced meal replacement diet, including shakes, salads and wraps and carb-free, high-protein dinners.
- Make sure you have a support network – even if it's one person to cheer you on.

‘Get as many belly laughs into your day as you can!’



LOST 63KG
Start weight
128kg
Current weight
65kg

‘It’s easier to do everything, including meeting girls!’

MITCH COX, 24

‘I WAS A HEART ATTACK WAITING TO HAPPEN’

At 93kg, Mitch is lighter now than he was in the sixth grade when he tipped the scales at 115kg. Now 24 and standing at 185cm, it’s hard to believe with his movie-star looks that he’s ever been anything but gorgeous.

‘I was the fat baby, fat kid, fat teenager and destined to be the fat bloke for the rest of my life,’ Mitch says. ‘I was the victim of some pretty harsh bullying as a kid. It hurt, real bad.’

Growing up on junk food, Mitch was so out of control with eating that when he got his driver’s licence he was excited for the wrong reasons. ‘I remember the minute I got it, I thought: “Now I don’t have to get out of the car at Macca’s. I can drive through!”’ he says.

Losing his closest mate in 2009 was the trigger Mitch needed to take a look at himself. ‘When Tamaz died, I remember lying in bed at night and thinking that could have been me. I was a heart attack waiting to happen. I once counted my daily intake of calories – it was up around 10,000 [42,000kJ],’ Mitch says.

It took his competitive streak to get him to where he is now. ‘I joined Goodlife Health Clubs and completed two of their 12 Week Challenge programs. So far I’ve dropped 67kg since September 2009,’ Mitch says. ‘The food addiction was killing me. I have it under control now.’

Now he’s living his dream life. ‘I have my confidence back, so it’s easier to do everything, including meeting girls!’ he laughs. Visit www.goodlifehealthclubs.com.au. **NI**

MY DIET SECRET

- Use your competitive streak to your advantage – join a weight-loss program.
- Egg-white omelette for breakfast, chicken or fish for lunch and a light chicken meal in the evening.

LOST 67KG
Start weight
160kg
Current weight
93kg

