



# Real world work-outs

Depression led to a change of outlook for TV fitness guru Lee-Anne Wann's new book. Kate Mead reports.

WHY SWEAT it at the gym when you can work out in your car? Or at the office? According to Lee-Anne Wann, it's small, regular exercises that lead to big changes.

Wann, the former "hardcore kickass trainer" from TV3's reality weight-loss show *Downsize Me!*, recently released her latest book, *No-Fuss Fitness*, a guide packed with simple exercises, nutrition advice and wellbeing tips.

When I meet Wann at an Auckland cafe she looks the picture of health, arriving in her workout gear with a warm smile on her face. But, as she writes in her book, she is recovering from severe burnout and depression and it has taken her a while to get back to the level of happiness she now has.

"I asked the question, 'If I wrote about [depression], why would I write about it?'" says the 37-year-old. "I want to keep it real, I want people to know that we all have those hurdles and I think the more people just talk about it . . . it just makes it normal."

While Wann was working on *Downsize Me!*, she was also working as a personal trainer, as well as training for body sculpting

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competitions in her free time. She'd get home and have a brief sleep, before getting up the next day and starting all over again.

Eventually it became too much.

"I didn't get a wake-up call, I hit the wall," she admits. "I literally went to work one day, came home that night, pretty much just crumpled into a heap on the floor, burst into tears and my husband said 'That's it', took me to the doctor and the next day the doctor said 'You have clinical depression'."

Born in Taranaki, Wann worked in analytics and forecasting in the Middle East before becoming a gym instructor 10 years ago.

A career change, she says, sparked by vanity. "It all stemmed from being unhappy with the way I looked. I did [fitness] programmes that are out there and they didn't work the same way for me as they're supposed to," she says.

"I blamed myself for a long time and I went, 'Oh my God, I'm just meant to be fat' . . . then I honestly went, 'Screw it, I'm no different from other people, there must be a way for me to achieve a physical look that I want'."

These days, Wann's main focus is working as a health practitioner, looking at nutritional medicine and healthy lifestyles – interests she became engrossed in while recovering from depression.

"My whole focus has changed from looking good to feeling good," she says. "It's what I would have called in my old days a bit girly or a bit soft, because we're not hard-core amping out in the gym. But, to be fair, how many people are actually like that?"

*No-Fuss Fitness* is filled with Wann's tips on everything from

improving your posture to what kind of food to eat when you're stressed. The workout section contains instructions and images of easy-to-follow exercises that you can do anywhere, anytime – on the beach, in the park, at home, in the car or even in the office.

Wann believes many people have trouble losing weight and sustaining a healthy lifestyle because they try to do too much. "People think, in order to achieve any result, they have to spend a huge amount of time [exercising]."

"I have a 10-minute rule for training. I say to people, 'Right, it doesn't matter what you're doing, go out and do whatever it is for 10 minutes. Go and weight train for 10 minutes, go for a walk for 10 minutes . . . If after 10 minutes you don't want to do it, then go home, stop. If after 10 minutes you're not feeling better, you won't . . . but nine times out of 10 you will want to keep going . . . so I think people set themselves up with too much and then when they don't achieve it, they think of themselves as failing and then the guilt gets them.'"

Wann uses the phrase "keeping it real" a lot, and she wants *No-Fuss Fitness* to reflect that. Her book is for anyone wanting to make healthy changes in their life. "It's not for people who already train at the gym, it's not for fitness fanatics . . . it's just for people who want somewhere to start," she says.

After overcoming tough times, Wann is happy with who she is



now. "I can truly, honestly say I like who I am and that's a big thing for people," she says. "I deal with a lot of people where the root of the problem is they're not really liking themselves . . . but if you can truly like who you are and you come from a place of kindness, then you can't not succeed at whatever you do."

**No-Fuss Fitness: Your Guide to Working Out in the Real World** by Lee-Anne Wann, Penguin, RRP\$35.



### Lee-Anne Wann's top wellbeing tips

► Add my coconut tea drink to

your daily regime: one tablespoon of coconut oil dissolved in red bush tea every morning before breakfast and every evening before dinner. Trust me on this – coconut oil helps you burn calories, reduce anxiety, manage appetite and promotes stunning skin, as well as a host of other benefits.

► Eat lots of protein like chicken, fish, eggs, nuts, meat, cottage cheese. Protein helps with mental focus and concentration, as well as helping to manage appetite and keep you full for longer.

► Sleep is one of the key ingredients for feeling great, eating well, losing weight and juggling lots of things. Try to get to bed by 10pm as this is when our physical healing takes place and our stress levels return to normal – missing this means your stress levels will stay high, which is a sure way to

feel pressured, stressed and wanting to eat lots of food high in sugar.

► Add green tea to your drinking regime as it is not only high in great antioxidants but it also contains a compound that can lower stress levels, which will help with weight loss if that is your goal. Aim for five cups a day.

► Make any exercise you do the best choice for you and your goals, as your time is precious. For example, if you wish to lose weight, 20 minutes of high-intensity sessions are far more effective for weight loss than 40 minutes of steady state (normal) cardio and will kick your feel-good hormones up a couple of notches.

Visit [lee-annewann.com](http://lee-annewann.com) for more tips and information.



Anywhere, anytime: In *No-Fuss Fitness*, Lee-Anne Wann (above right) makes it easy to fit exercise into your daily routine. Photo: Fairfax