

Gwyneth's diet diary

Our readers' favourite, 52-year-old training manager Gwyneth Watson, is serious about shaping up this year. But is the wintry weather about to spoil her best-laid plans...?

Late February 2010

I logged on to [rosemaryconleyonline](#) to review my progress for last year. Overall, in my quest to be slim and healthy, I put on 9lb! What an appalling thing to admit, and what a waste of all the tools and support on the site. Well, that's the confession out of the way – on to much more positive things.

I am getting on much better in 2010. My desire to overeat was "helped" by the onslaught of swine flu. At my lowest point, I thought I would either die or get better, and dragged myself on to the scales! A 3lb loss in 6 days – result. But my illness caused a serious setback with my Wii personal trainer and some American virtual fitness geek (Christmas presents from Graham). They consider my fitness levels to be through the floor (yes?), and urge me "not to give up – you are awesome".

There doesn't seem to be anywhere that I can virtually tell them to "stuff off, because I'm doing my best here".

I am also toning up my legs and arms by indulging in Wii tennis, bowling and boxing. But I think I am developing a funny shape as, although I have always referred to myself as being left-handed, I am swinging racquets and bowling with my right arm. Being a technophobe, I can't work out how to alter the settings. I try until frustration makes me want to sling the whole lot out of the window.

Sensible shape

Rosemary's latest DVD is a well-honed understanding of sensible exercise and toning, to music that I recognise as having a tune. I am enjoying getting back into a more sensible shape. Not sure about my mental state, as my favourite track involves punching moves.

I want to improve my cardio fitness, so that when spring finally springs, I can get back into a jogging routine up the lane.

The minute I stopped exercising, the weight piled back on. I expect because I filled the exercise time with lolling about and eating.

I ordered one of Rosemary's new Magic Measures tapes and I can only recommend that you invest in one of these. At the very least, your hands will be engaged while you clip on the tags, so you won't be eating. Perhaps I should string it up along the shower rail, as a daily reminder of how colourful my diminishing body can look.

I do like the visual portrayal of inch loss rather than always seeing it as a lot of numbers written down.

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Amazing arrival

Another new arrival in the Watson household is Rosemary's new Amazing Inch Loss Plan diet book. It's an addition to my library of all things RC, and I need to read and apply the knowledge. Rosemary is amazing. I know that everything she promotes she personally believes in, and it works – it is me that puts the mockers on weight loss around here.

I was very enamoured by a motivational tip for day one where you recognise and talk to your mirror image not as yourself, but as a friend you want to help. I stripped off and had a good look. I felt sorry for the poor, baggy woman – she needs to cover up between her bosom and her knees!

While I am not good at following precisely prescribed daily menus, I do like the lists of calorie-counted breakfasts, lunches, dinners and snacks that you can mix and match. I also like numbers in addition to weight. For instance, it was a real shock to find that breakfast choices included a banana and 14 Weetabix Minis Fruit and Nut. That's meant to last me a whole morning? I can fit 16 in a ramekin dish as a telly snack! Just shows that, even when I think I am doing well with portion control, I clearly am not.

Cheesy chips

It's now well into February, and today I threw the last of the Christmas cake into the back garden. I felt good that I disposed of the icing and marzipan in the bin rather than my mouth. Someone else who had a good day was the pheasant, last seen legging it across the lawn with a lump of cake in his beak. He normally lives on the insects in the woodpile, so it was truly a feast for him. We have a temporary member of staff. She is very slender and exists on water, herbal tea, rice cakes and fruit; and goes to the gym three times a week. I don't like her. Well, actually, I probably do, it's just that we haven't established demarcation lines on diet talk or habits yet, and what I probably don't like is that she clearly demonstrates more discipline than I can muster.

I also don't like the latest intake of teenage students, none of whom appear overweight, yet regularly take over the kitchen to eat chips covered in melted cheese. My face must have been transparent, because my colleague walked by and simply said: "Watch their hips when they have had children." I am not sure about the boys...

Cold comfort

The winter freeze came back with a vengeance and we had no heating at work. Graham had admonished me that morning for not preparing a sensible lunch; so I ran out of the door with warm rice mixed with chopped salad and vegetables.

Work brought in emergency electric heaters, which blew fuses, so we had no heating, computers or telephones. The Boss sent us all out for lunch on the company while they figured out how to keep us warm and useful. That's why I

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ate chicken and bacon panini with salad. I didn't eat pudding, though, as that would clearly be piggish.

Next day, on a waste-not, want-not basis, I half ate the ice-cold rice and vegetables from the fridge. Not a pleasant experience. Graham had promised me flash-fry steak and dry roast vegetables for tea. I came in (frozen) and looked disappointed that the oven wasn't even on. Graham said he had turned down the thermostat and delayed cooking tea "so that you can do your aerobics before eating". He's thoughtful – isn't he?

After all the hard work I have been putting in, I felt justified in whining at Graham to make me a pancake. As a Christian, I should certainly support religious activities and eat up the fat before Lent.

I have to ask Graham, because anything involving a frying pan and liquid is doomed to failure for me. I wanted two – one with lemon and a sprinkling of sugar, the other with two teaspoons of golden syrup. Not much for a girl to want. He never was any good at saying "no" to me, but strangely, I can't seem to find on the dessert list in Rosemary's book how many calories I have eaten. I should have read the magazine and found the pancake recipes in there.

Day of reckoning

I am trying to keep my motivation levels high. As you read this, I shall be preparing to go (with Mum and two of my sisters) to the third sister's hen party. I am not sure where the alcohol will come in, but it will, and it will need to be accompanied by food, so that our blood sugar levels don't drop and we have the stamina to party.

Also, it is now March and I have to be sylph-like next Christmas and the year is going too quickly.

Well, the day of reckoning has come. I think the last time I declared my weight to you was months ago, and it was 12st 5lb. Now it's 12st 10lb.

In the spirit of true confession (which was where I started this article), I know that I have lost 4lb in the 2 weeks since I obtained the Amazing Inch Loss Plan, so I must have stacked it on over the winter period again.

I'm a grown woman (too grown). I am already addressing the issue. I have updated my online weight log, and I'm off to invest in a pair of FitFlops.

Note to self: I am not going to buy Easter eggs, mini-eggs, chocolate slabs or anything that is going to boost my sugar addiction. Neither am I going to put the chocolate that I am not going to buy in my car for grazing...

Weight lost to date : 1st 11lb

Gwyneth now weighs 12st 10lb

Top tip

- Do your main exercise early in the day, and then you can feel smug and forget about it for the rest of the day!

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High points

- Being rewarded for effort – lower numbers on the scales and Magic Measure®.
- Saying “no thank you” and realising that I haven't fallen apart from hunger.
- Being able to look my spring wardrobe in the face, and know that I shall not have to buy a bigger size since last year.
- Having social functions to look forward to and keep me motivated.

Low points

- Having 2 “sinful” days for every “good” one.

What I have learned this month

- Guessing at portions probably has an error factor of 50%.
- There are more calories in a WeightWatchers chocolate roll than a 2-finger Kit Kat.