

Ride to Life - Peer Reviews April 2020

Achieving a healthy weight in our modern world is hard for us all - monumentally so. In this inspiring, heartfelt and deeply practical book, Dr Gary Leong embraces the complexity of the obesity challenge and shows how to harness the power of families to transform their lives and communities by approaching the challenge “just one thing at a time”. This has to be the way of the future. We must learn new habits, follow Gary’s KINIMS (yes, he makes up words too), and “ride together” to break the cycle of obesity.

Stephen J. Simpson, Academic Director, Charles Perkins Centre, University of Sydney and Executive Director, Obesity Australia.

Dr Leong takes a wholistic approach that encourages the *whole* (extended) family to consider not just the eating, activity and sleep habits that underpin a healthy lifestyles but also a *whole* range of emotional, social, cultural and community factors that make important behaviour changes needed to achieve a healthier lifestyle so challenging. The book includes powerful family stories and plenty of practical ideas and exercises to assist parents to take charge and identify, plan and implement the changes that are right for their own family. Additional resources and tools are available on the supplementary website.

Parents are not judged but supported to understand the process and challenges of gradual, manageable, consistent, sustainable behaviour change. The ‘Just One Thing’ approach that encourages just one small change at a time is a simple and powerful message. There is an important emphasis on parent self-care and parenting.

Overall the book and program are evidence-based, include sound behaviour change strategies and are presented in an engaging, family friendly format.

Professor Lynne Daniels, Emeritus Professor of Nutrition Faculty of Health, School - Exercise and Nutrition Sciences, Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane, Australia.

Dr Gary takes a complex issue and breaks it down in easy, digestible parts. He delivers a powerful and timely message, that gets to the truth of matter in an honest, but compassionate understanding of the struggle with weight gain. This book is for those that are lost and mystified by the glut of non-evidenced based information in popular media. Above all, this influential book will help you understand the complexity of weight gain and strategies to regain your family’s health and wellbeing. I highly recommend Gary’s approach to understanding weight loss and producing a well-defined, evidenced-based approach to a healthy life.

*Dr Stephen Myers
Senior Lecturer in Biochemistry and Molecular biology and
Head of the metabolic disease group at the University of Tasmania, Australia.*

In our current lifestyle excess weight in their child is a common concern for parents. It should almost always be seen in the context of the whole family. It is easy to be overwhelmed by unrealistic advice on diet and exercise, lose heart, and give up trying to make lifestyle changes.

Dr K has written a sensible, holistic book for the whole family that brings together achievable goals, each building on previous steps. There is no preaching, the advice is comprehensive and would lead to successful control of weight in most cases if followed.

He emphasises the importance of empowering parents to be inspiring role models for their children, while realising this in itself is a huge challenge for many families, whose story of severe obesity and chronic disease appears pre-ordained and any efforts to change this story of poor health ignored at the peril of the next generation.

*Professor Jerry Wales Professor of Paediatrics, The University of Queensland
Inaugural Director of Paediatric Endocrinology and Diabetes
QLD Children 's Hospital, South Brisbane, Queensland, Australia
Former Chairman of Guideline Development Group, United Kingdom, -
National Institute for Health Care and Excellence (NICE) guidelines of management of diabetes
in children 2015.*

There are just so many messages in Ride to Life that make this book a must read for any parent or carer. The focus of the book is to support families with children who are obese or have a high risk for developing type 2 diabetes. Gary's practical 4 step process for improving family health can be applied by all parents and carers.

I love how Gary has made this so easy for families to understand and implement. From his simple "Just One Thing Rule" that encourages families to integrate just one new behaviour or habit at a time to prevent being overwhelmed to the wonderful icons used throughout the book to support learning, it's just so simple.

I also love the message to parents about letting their children take on age appropriate activities for their own health and wellbeing. Such a crucial part of a child's health journey to becoming a responsible adult who can take care of their own health.

This book is just so practical and the 2020 Family Health Challenge is a brilliant way for families to participate and monitor their own success.

*Belinda Smith, Author of The Lunchbox Effect, Educator and Health
and Wellness Coach, The Root Cause*

Dr Gary's holistic, sustainable and 'Just one thing' approach to childhood obesity is refreshing. Gary is right. Everyone in the family must take responsibility and parents must use their power to stop this intergenerational epidemic. This book offers a sustainable and practical approach to families to stop this growing and preventable disease from dictating their future health

Dr Sue Read (Dietitian and Microbiologist), Owner of HealthMap.

Gary's approach to the debilitating (and often exasperating) topic of obesity will empower and transform lives through his book. Debunking the one-solution-fixes-all method to overcoming obesity, Gary takes a holistic viewpoint, encompassing all the denominators that lead to weight gain. Gary conveys his expert information in a common-sense, inclusive and balanced way. However, most importantly, Gary is deeply compassionate; he understands the dark spiral of social isolation and inner separation that obesity can create. *A Ride to Life* is a must-read, practical bible for those families desiring to live a healthy, happy and fulfilled life.

Gary can intimately describe and sympathise with the deep and dark emotional trauma that lies hidden in the hearts of people suffering overweight or obesity.

He understands that the condition goes more than fat-deep and is not merely caused by excessive eating, as the stigma goes.

Gary counters the pop-notion that it is easy to lose weight when eating like a 'skinny person', highlighting the strong, counter-intuitive physiological control mechanisms that prevent the body losing weight. Not to mention the complex social and psychological challenges that can often be overlooked by general society.

I love how Gary understands family dynamics and the inter-generational complexities that an obese child faces, offering his all-encompassing, practical solutions.

*Louise Elliott BSc (HMS), Master Trainer (Fitness), Dip. Nutritional Therapist,
Founder of CommonHealth Kids, Author of 'The Amazing Army – Gets Kids Healthy' and 'The
Superfruit Juice Book', and creator of children's nutrition education productions.*
