

On a mission for nutrition

What we eat is of vital importance to Fleur Brown who runs a busy and successful nutritional therapy practice in Tunbridge Wells where she has helped hundreds of people towards better health through changing their diet

Words Caroline Hardy
Photos Sean Aidan

It could be said we have a fifth season in this country – spring, summer, autumn, winter and diet. For some the season lasts all year, for others though it begins on January 1 with a list of dreary resolutions, starting with 'must lose weight' or 'start a healthy diet'.

Fleur Brown has seen it all before, the successes and the failures, and it was her passion for food and determination to help people achieve a healthier way of living that led to a change of career 15 years ago.

"I was working in a senior position in advertising and finding myself under increased pressure, working late hours and becoming more stressed," reflects Fleur.

"When my husband Chris and I decided to start a family, we had a big rethink and decided on a complete career change.

"I love dealing with people as well as food and cooking, so I decided to look for something that would combine them both. I'd never heard of nutritional therapy, but I went to see a therapist and it changed my life," says Fleur. "I was doing all the wrong things, drinking

black coffee, smoking and doing no exercise, but my diet was changed, I was given supplements and immediately started to feel better."

Fleur studied at the Institute of Optimum Health, graduating with distinction before setting up her business, Fleur Brown Nutrition, which she has run from its Monson Road site in Tunbridge Wells for the past 13 years.

She sees clients with a wide range of problems, such as low immunity, food intolerances, hormonal and digestive concerns, and is also a registered Foresight clinician, specialising in infertility and pre-conceptual care.

"It is about re-educating people on how to eat," says Fleur. "One of the most common complaints from people is that they have low energy, but once I have looked at, and changed their diet, it is something that can be solved."

Alongside this, Fleur and Chris run SlimmingPals, where small groups of people are helped to lose weight based on a lifestyle-friendly dietary plan, focussed on her passion – healthy eating.

The groups of up to eight people meet in an informal atmosphere, at Fleur's home, usually around the pine table in her spacious, but cosy kitchen.

"We wanted to find a way of helping people lose weight in a healthy way based on absolutely sound nutritional science, but in a fun way," she says.

To that end, the couple have devised a large selection of easy-to-prepare menus and recipes to help with weight-loss. Particularly popular are Chris's mini chocolate cakes – "we all love those!" admits Fleur.

Her message on nutrition is simple. "I don't believe healthy eating has to be an ordeal or a chore," she says. "By altering a diet, whether it is to lose weight or help solve a health problem, our perceptions of food as well as our lives can be changed for the better."

For more details contact Fleur on 01892 616621 or visit her website www.fleurbrownnutrition.co.uk



The lowdown

Name Fleur Brown
Age 45
Lives Pembury, Kent

How did you start? I worked in marketing for many years in a number of roles, including as a board director in a major advertising agency. When I had my two children, Tavi, now aged 14, and Kristan, 11, I wanted to find a new career that would offer me flexibility and the ability to control my own time. I had always been interested in healthy eating and cooking delicious foods, so a new career as a nutritional therapist became a natural choice.

Is what you are doing a lifelong dream? It's evolved, more than been a dream. I've always had a passionate love of food. When I studied at the Sorbonne in Paris I got into food and the French way of eating, which I thought was wonderful. It changed my perception of food and eventually led to what I am doing now.

Where do you see yourself in five years? I would love to have a nutrition centre in Tunbridge Wells, with two or three nutritionists working with me, where people would know where to go when they had a problem they need to sort out. I'd also like the SlimmingPals groups to grow.

What advice would you give to anyone starting out in a career in nutritional therapy? Starting any new business is very time consuming. It can be easy to lose the plot when you are juggling home, family and work, so make sure you find time and space for yourself, to have fun and remember it is only part of your life.

