



HEALTH

WHEN Eloise King NEEDED A PHYSICAL AND MENTAL DETOX, SHE DECIDED TO DO IT HERSELF AT HOME

DIY HEALTH SPA



Kapow! What a week. I feel ready to take on the world. But that wasn't the case seven days ago. In the weeks leading up to my DIY health retreat, I was cloudy-headed, unfit, hung

over too often, and a bit lost, truth be told. The death of my grandmother and my pet cat of 17 years, combined with the daily grind of motherhood and some personal issues, had led me to the brink of an emotional downward spiral. Life was getting on top of me and suddenly I didn't want to get off the couch. I needed help to claw back some control, but the health retreats were solidly booked. Instead, I devised my own extreme week of home health and relaxation. If you can't find what you want, why not do it yourself?

THE PREPARATION

■ Planning is key to the success of your home health retreat. Before you start, ask around for the best local treatment contacts, book your appointments, record your daily schedule, commit to cutting out alcohol and caffeine and stock up on fresh fruit, vegetables and herbal teas.

My routine went something like this: yoga daily at 6.15am and raw food for all meals. Throughout the week I had two colonic irrigations, two massages, two life coaching sessions and a facial. I also used the time to clear out closets and clean my house.

YOGA

■ Saluting the sun with a 6.15am yoga class at Sydney's Power Living was empowering. Starting the day by connecting to the rhythm of my lungs and sweating quietly through a ritual of flowing asanas was grounding. Yes, there was pain, but the result was a deeper level of connection. But in the last 10 minutes of my fifth day of yoga, my back muscles began to spasm mid-backbend. Listen to your body to minimise the risk of injury.

- **Cost:** \$17 for initial 10-day pass.
- **Contact:** www.powerliving.com.au

COLONIC IRRIGATION

■ Princess Diana, Madonna and Gwyneth Paltrow have done it, but whoa, this was confronting. Before being plugged into the appropriate tubing, I discussed how to get the best results with my practitioner from Sydney's Boda, who recommended three weekly sessions in combination with a raw-food diet.

The sensation of water flowing the wrong way through my colon was odd. I watched my belly swell and felt the pressure increase as the tube got caught behind colonic matter and subside as it pushed past. A cramping sensation signalled it was time to let the water flush out and do its job.

The focus on my health and the simple act of committing to something as extreme as colonic irrigation provided a good part of the motivation to stick to the cleansing habits. I felt cleaner and lighter after each session.

- **Cost:** Sessions from \$95.
- **Contact:** Boda, (02) 9969 9013.



LIFE COACHING

■ My initial Tempo coaching session gave me a paper snapshot of my life to identify the impact of my health, relationships, finances, career, purpose and spirituality. This provided the foundation for deciding where changes were needed for balance and optimal performance. In session two, I set three big goals regarding my health, purpose and career and felt pumped to make them happen. Tempo's coaching sessions are done in person, over the phone, Skype or via email.

■ **Cost:** Initial session is free. Sessions from \$95, programs from \$950.

■ **Contact:** Tempo coaching, 1800 668 885.

FACIAL

■ This facial is the best in the business. Founder of MV organic skincare products, Sharon McGlinchey, uses massage, guided meditation, reiki and breathing through her facials to enhance a deep state of relaxation and healing. Try it; you won't regret it.

■ **Cost:** From \$165.

■ **Contact:** www.mvskincare.com.au

ACUPUNCTURE A-DRAIN

■ The "A" is for aggression and this treatment is designed to drain negative energy from your major organs. With needles positioned down the length of both sides of my spine, I was left lying on my front for 30 minutes. Post treatment, I felt slow and lethargic, but later I felt uplifted and was flooded with optimism for the rest of the evening.

■ **Cost:** From \$78.

■ **Contact:** Kaye Gartner Health, (02) 9960 6339.

MASSAGE

There's nothing better than a good massage. During a cleanse, toxins are dumped into your system as you withdraw from stimulants and massage helps eliminate them faster.

■ **Cost:** From \$58.50.

■ **Contact:** Kaye Gartner Health, (02) 9960 6339.

CONCLUSION

■ A caffeine withdrawal headache on day one had me reaching for a decaf, but that was my only slip. I felt cloudy-headed on days two and three, but by day four I felt great. It's been three months since my DIY retreat and I'm still off booze, coffee and processed foods, and exercising regularly. I've got a huge amount of energy and have lost three kilos. Perhaps next time you find yourself in a slump, you could DIY detox too?

THE PROS:

- *You plug into your local network of health practitioners.*
- *You can cleanse both your home and your health.*
- *You increase the chance of integrating healthy habits into your lifestyle for the long term.*
- *Your retreat can be scheduled around children's school times.*

THE CONS

- *Temptation is never far away. A weak moment is more likely to lead to a sneaky coffee or glass of vino.*
- *Your meals are not prepared by a professional chef.*
- *You're more available to be interrupted by the world.*



Average seven-day detox package at a health retreat: **\$3000.**
DIY health retreat (including a three-week colonic irrigation package): **\$1072.**