

The Real Jenny Craig Speaks Out

BY CLAIRE ZULKEY



The name "Jenny Craig" has become so synonymous with the weight-loss program that many women might not know there's a real Jenny Craig. There is—she's no Betty Crocker. She chatted with TCW on a recent stop in Chicago, her former hometown, to promote her new autobiography, *The Jenny Craig Story: How One Woman Changes Millions of Lives*, and talk to us about fad diets, healthy living and how she inspires other women.

Why did you wait until now to share your story? It really started out as a journal for my family. My grandkids were always asking me what it was like growing up—I guess they think I'm a dinosaur. Then people who read it said, "Why don't you make it public?" I changed the direction a little when I decided to publish it, and talked a bit more about the business and my philosophy.

The focus on diet and exercise wasn't as strong as it is today when you founded Jenny Craig in 1983. What challenges did you face? It was so frustrating in the beginning. I'd ask doctors, "What do you say to an overweight person?" And they'd say, "Well, I tell her to eat less," and that just wasn't enough. At Jenny Craig, we focus on food, body and mind. We don't believe that any healthy eating plan should be limited to only a few foods. You can eat all foods in moderation. Plus certain foods are beneficial in terms of nutrients and they also help prevent serious disease.

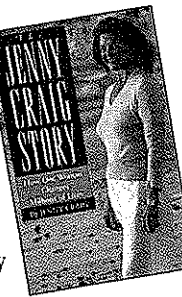
Why do you think the focus on diet and exercise has become so much more intense since you started? The Baby Boomers represent a huge part of society and they're now at the age where they're beginning to see the effects of the lifestyles they've been living. When I was growing up, there weren't any fast food chains. Now, we're all looking for the quick fix, to go out and pick something up. There's no commitment to anything, and that's really the key. Weight management doesn't happen overnight; it takes constant monitoring and appraisal. Just like we manage our hair and teeth, just like it's important for women to get mammograms and pap smears. You do these things to manage your body, and it's the same with weight. It's not something you can go on and off from.

Of the current diet trends, which do you think will stick around the longest? I don't think any of them will. Because of the lack of variety in most diets, research shows that people fall off after six months. Once people have tried it and they've fallen off, they're not going back to it.

This isn't the first time that Atkins came around. He was introduced back in the '60s with an alternative medicine clinic in New York with herbs, extracts and things like that. He got a lot of bad publicity from one of his patients. After taking some of the products that he recommended, her arms and legs got numb and she sued him. That all died down, and then he came back with the Weight Loss Revolution. It shows you that these things peter out and people get tired of it.

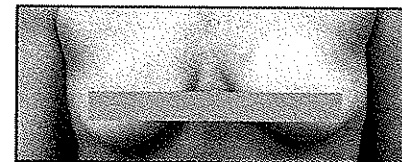
Jenny Craig has lots of famous spokespeople. How do you ask a celebrity to go on your diet? Sometimes we have people that will come to us or one of them will be going to a center and then the manager will call and say "Oh, do you know that so-and-so has lost X amount of pounds?" And I won't even know she was on the program, and then we'll approach her and ask her about doing a testimonial. Occasionally we've seen someone who could benefit from the program. We'll approach her, talk to her manager and ask her how she'd feel about being a spokesperson.

Do you miss Chicago at all? I think Chicago's the greatest city in the whole country because it has everything New York has but the feel and the culture of a small town. When I lived on State Street and I'd go shopping on Oak Street, everyone would wave and say "Hi Jenny!" You don't get that in New York. ■



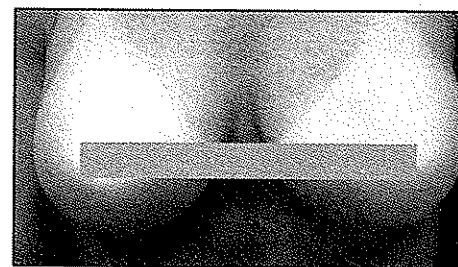
GO FIGURE

Before



Unretouched photos of actual patient following breast augmentation.

After



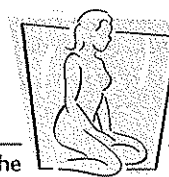
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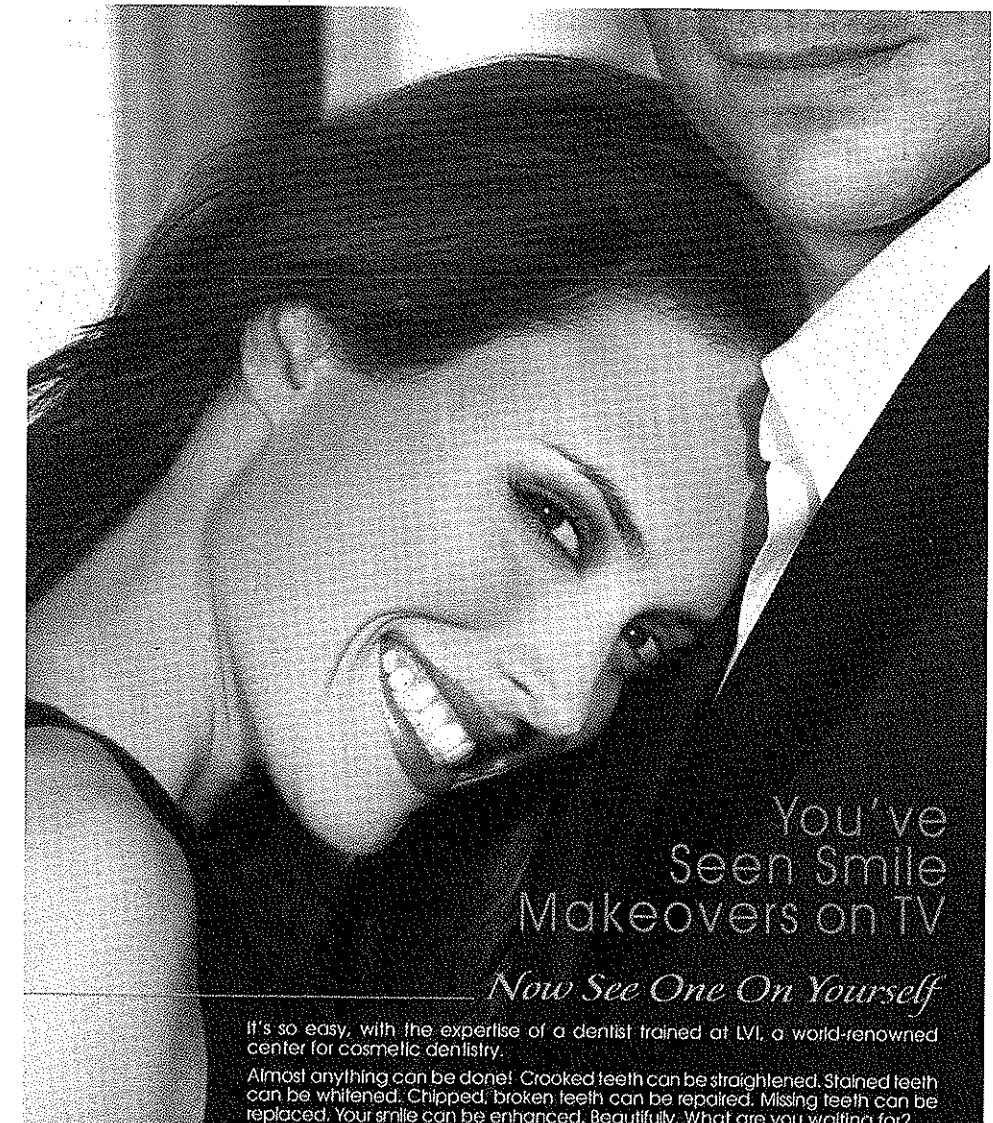
Dr. Peter Geldner is a nationally recognized board certified plastic and cosmetic surgeon who was nominated "Best Plastic Surgeon" and "America's Top



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