



**BEFORE**

"I used to make so much of food," says Judd (in January 2009). "I was like an addict looking for the next fix."

**WYNONNA JUDD**

# HOW I LOST 55 LBS.

After years of turning to food for comfort, the singer drops five dress sizes with the help of a new treatment and a new outlook on life **BY DANIELLE ANDERSON**

**F**or years, Wynonna Judd has been waging a very public battle with her weight. Though she has tried different diets (most recently she was the face of the weight-loss drug Alli), appeared on *Oprah* to talk about her emotional eating issues and even checked herself into a rehab center for food addiction in 2006, in the end, the country star saw little success and a lot of failure. As her weight continued to creep up, she recalls, "My managers said to me, 'We see you're doing a really good job of ending your life by slow suicide.'"



**AFTER**

"I was always really self-conscious," says Judd (outside her Tennessee home on Oct. 5) of her figure. And now? "I feel sassy."

PHOTO: MICHAEL LAVINE/GETTY IMAGES

## WHAT IS BRAIN-STATE CONDITIONING?

The premise behind this new technology? People suffer from issues such as compulsive eating or addiction because their brain-wave frequencies are out of balance. BSC helps reset the brain to a neutral state by having patients listen to a personalized pattern of sounds. After 10 to 14 sessions, "people feel more grounded," says computer scientist Lee Gerdes, founder of Brain State Technologies, which has centers in 33 states. "There's no independent data to back it up, but it's helpful," says Dr. Gerard Musante of Structure House, a weight-loss facility. "It teaches people to deal with stress."

That is, until now. Judd, 46, recently dropped an impressive 55 lbs. with the help of brain-state conditioning—a treatment designed to help patients be less inclined to turn to vices such as drugs, alcohol or overeating for relief during stressful situations (see box). While some doctors suggest less extreme ways to reduce tension, such as yoga, Judd credits the \$195 sessions with steering her clear of comfort eating. "It does something to you that is subtle, but it doesn't make you bark like a dog, like being hypnotized," explains the 5'5" singer as she sits outside the Leiper's Fork, Tenn., farm she shares with her kids, Elijah, 15, and Grace, 14. (Dad is Judd's first husband, ex-boat-salesman Arch Kelley.) "It balances me. I was taking medications for high-stress situations, and I don't do that anymore."

During her 90-minute sessions at the Brain State Technologies center in Scottsdale, Ariz., Judd is hooked up to sensors so doctors can monitor her brain activity. She then listens to music created specifically for her that helps calm her mind. After 10 to 14 sessions, Judd found her cravings subsided. "I was really hooked on caffeine, and I don't need it anymore. I

even gave away my coffee machine," says Judd, who is more dedicated to a healthy diet that includes oatmeal for breakfast instead of three bowls of cold cereal. She's dropped five dress sizes, and now, "I can bend over and tie my shoes without breaking into a sweat."

In the past, "I'd eat a box of doughnuts. It was like a chip, I couldn't eat just one," says Judd, who has long suffered with bouts of depression. "I was eating thousands of calories each day." That only amplified when she split from second husband Dan Roach after he was arrested for aggravated sexual battery against a minor in '07. (He later pleaded guilty to a lesser offense and was sentenced to 90 days in jail.) "The marriage she counted on went away," says her life coach Dr. Ted Klontz. "Food made her feel better in her misery."

Then came two near-death experiences. In March, after Judd underwent surgery to repair damage to her stomach muscles, doctors discovered several pulmonary emboli—potentially life-threatening blood clots in her lungs—which they successfully treated. Four months later Judd was involved in a head-on collision while in Salt Lake City for a concert. Since then, she says, "I'm more determined than ever to commit to a healthier lifestyle."

But despite her recent slim-down success, she continues to struggle. "I still have bad days," says Judd, who declined to give her exact weight. "The other day I bought a cheeseburger and ate half. But sometimes I'll just eat the whole thing." Judd—who kicks off the Last Encore tour with her mom on Nov. 26—doesn't beat herself up over it. "If I weigh a little less one week, great. If I don't, I'll get it next week. I don't have this sense of hopelessness I used to."

Right now she's focused on having fun. "I feel more alive. I went to my first club in Vegas, and I danced on the pole with friends!" says Judd, who is in a "serious" relationship but demurs on giving details. She's not shy, however, about showing off her new body. "I went into a lingerie store for the first time where I didn't feel embarrassed. I left feeling like Miss America! I'm having a *real* good time." ●

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"After a show, I stay away from cruising the refrigerator. I get back to my room and dance," says Judd (with her mom, Naomi, in June).