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COUNTING SHLEEP

Indi McCullough on wool and her journey from workaholic to wellness

"Like everyone I worked with, or competed against, I was a victim of the 'no-sleep cool' falsehood that made me less insightful, creative and decisive. Everything gets worse without sleep — from our appearance to our energy levels, productivity, mental and physical health and even relationships," says Indi McCullough, founder of Australian sleep brand Shleep. "Then to improve our sleep many of us lean on prescription pills or just choose to ignore our symptoms, which leads to chronic health conditions."

A transplant from the US, McCullough found herself in Australia, where she rediscovered wool. "I'd always thought of wool in the context of bulky, scratchy crew-neck sweaters that keep out the cold but mess up your hair in winter! Then I discovered how Australians sleep in wool and decided to launch Shleep."

Importantly, though, this wasn't just any wool — McCullough's revelation was pure Australian merino wool, which is ultra-fine and therefore ultra-smooth and soft. Shleep treats the wool to enhance these attributes even further. "Each fibre is crimped, which results in a woven or knit product that has a natural pillowy loft and breathability," she says, "The fibre is so fine that it soothes you to sleep faster than cotton or synthetics. It also naturally wicks away perspiration, absorbing up to 35% of its own weight in moisture so your body stays dry, which keeps you in deeper sleep throughout the night. For knits, we add a patented technology that gives extra breathability and thermal and moisture regulation."

Since introducing wool into her bedroom, McCullough sleeps "like a baby". But more than that, she says, "I understand the importance of sleep to health and wellbeing."

Shleep's cosy range is available in store at Lane Crawford. And if McCullough's story resonates with you, check out our expert sleep advice in upcoming stories.